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THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION VOL. 8 □ NO. 6 □ JUNE/JULY 1988

RESTAURANTS USA

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

SEMINARS

Basic Foodservice Courses

Dining Room Management
8/16 Oakland, CA
8/17 San Diego, CA
8/30 St. Louis, MO
9/7 Columbus, OH
9/8 Detroit, MI
9/20 Des Moines, IA
9/21 Chicago, IL

Increasing Sales: Effective Front-of-the-House Management
8/23 Greenville, SC
9/20 St. Louis, MO

Kitchen Management
7/11 Denver, CO
7/25 Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
7/26 Madison, WI
8/8 St. Louis, MO
8/9 Lincoln, NE
8/29 Chicago, IL
8/30 Cleveland, OH
9/6 Baltimore, MD
9/19 Atlantic City, NJ
9/27 New York, NY
9/27 San Francisco, CA
9/28 Nassau/Suffolk, NY
9/28 Anaheim, CA

Employee Motivation
8/1 New Orleans, LA

Tools for Training
8/31 Riverside, CA
9/13 Grand Rapids, MI
9/15 Nassau/Suffolk, NY

Food Production Courses

Fish and Seafood
8/29 Denver, CO
8/31 Philadelphia, PA
9/14 Minneapolis, MN

Soups and Sauces
7/19 Seattle, WA

Foodservice Management Courses

Banquet Management
7/20 Cleveland, OH
7/21 Pittsburgh, PA
9/20 Atlantic City, NJ
9/22 Hartford, CT

Do-It-Yourself Public Relations
8/10 Denver CO
8/11 Arlington, TX

Food Cost Management
7/13 Newark, NJ
7/14 New York, NY
8/15 Detroit, MI
8/16 Houston, TX

Hiring in a Tight Labor Market
7/18 Eugene, OR
8/24 Boston, MA
8/25 Hartford, CT
9/14 Baltimore, MD
9/15 Washington, DC
9/19 Newark, NJ
9/20 Atlantic City, NJ
9/22 Worcester, MA

Menus that Sell!
9/21 Indianapolis, IN

Off-Premises Catering
8/3–4 Atlanta, GA
8/9–10 Monterey, CA
9/7–8 Raleigh, NC
9/28–29 Beverly Hills, CA

Operational Analysis
9/22–23 Norfolk, VA

Planning and Implementing a Restaurant Marketing Strategy
9/19–20 Atlantic City, NJ

Planning Successful Buffets
7/18 Knoxville, TN
8/8 Pittsburgh, PA
8/22 Lancaster, PA
9/19 Atlantic City, NJ
9/26 Toronto, Ontario
9/28 Halifax, Nova Scotia

Practical Foodservice Spreadsheets
9/13–14 Boston, MA

Profitability
9/11 Lincoln City, OR
9/13 Seattle, WA

Restaurant Design
9/29–30 New Orleans, LA

Server Sales Training
7/26 Los Angeles, CA
8/24 Atlanta, GA
9/21 Minneapolis, MN

Wine Server Training
7/28 Boston, MA
8/23 Seattle, WA
8/25 Portland, OR
9/8 Los Angeles, CA

1988 California Wine Workshop
9/24–30 Napa Valley, CA

For information, contact: Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth St., N.W. Washington, DC 20036-3097 (800) 424-5156 or (202) 331-5900

If your company is interested in our In-house programs, call or write to the attention of Frank Doyle at the above address.

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Foodservice Purchasing Managers
October Boston, MA

Internal Audit
9/13–16 Monterey, CA

Labor Relations
9/15–16 Columbus, OH

Large Independent Operators
9/14–16 Frankenmuth, MI

Management Information Systems
10/11–14 Hilton Head, SC

Marketing Executives
10/16–19 New Orleans, LA

Quality Assurance
10/12–14 Orlando, FL

Safety Officers
7/20–22 Vail, CO

Tax Executives
10/5–7 Monterey, CA

For more information on specific study groups, contact: Philip Kralovec, (312) 853-2525.

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VOL. 8 NO. 6 JUNE/JULY 1988

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jim L. Peterson, President and Chief Operating Officer
Whataburger, Inc., Corpus Christi, TX

A great Show!

It is with great pride that I put my pen to paper for the first time as your president. I believe the National Restaurant Association to be among the strongest and most influential trade organizations in America today, and I'm looking forward to my involvement in the coming year.

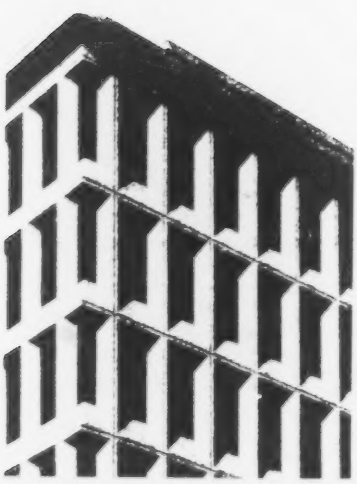
There is no greater demonstration of the strength of our association than the 69th National Restaurant Association Show, which drew a record 103,000 visitors to see 1,900 exhibits and to participate in educational programs and special events. This year's Show was made even more spectacular with a record 25 percent increase in the number of attendees from foreign countries—a clear indication that our Show has become an international industry forum. The international presence affected all aspects of the Show—from 15 foreign exhibitors displaying their goods and services on the floor to international teams participating in the Ice Carving Classic. This issue of ***Restaurants USA*** tells the Show story.

Minimum-wage bill—a top priority

Now that we've all returned from Chicago to our businesses, it's time to turn our focus to an issue that is a priority for any employer who offers jobs to entry-level workers—namely, the minimum-wage bill now before Congress.

Since this bill was first put forth a year ago, the National Restaurant Association has been in the forefront in the industry's opposition to such a measure. An increase in the minimum wage, we have argued, would hurt employer and employee alike. (1) It would force business owners to reduce employee hours. (2) It would cause the elimination of certain positions. (3) It would greatly limit the opportunities available for young people looking to enter the workforce for the first time through foodservice.

Our arguments have been heard. The fact that a floor vote on the minimum-wage bill has been delayed four times in the House of Representatives indicates that the proponents of the bill do not yet have sufficient votes to pass the bill and that concessions will have to be made.



I believe that grassroots lobbying on the part of our membership is greatly responsible for the consistent delay in passage of the minimum-wage bill. You have written your representatives. You have made telephone calls and sent mailgrams to Capitol Hill. In some instances, you have even travelled to Washington to meet personally with your Senators and congressional representatives.

But the fight is not over. We expect action on the bill in both the House and Senate—some are saying before the Democratic National Convention late this month. We must act now. I urge you to contact your Senators and Congressmen. If you've already made contact, go back and call, write or even visit them again. This is our last chance to be heard. It's our last chance to preserve the jobs and advancement opportunities that exist for entry-level workers in the foodservice industry.

AIDS videotapes available

The association's set of videotapes on AIDS is now available. The two tapes, sold in one packet, were produced to help educate foodservice employees about AIDS, to reassure them that the foodservice workplace is safe and to inform them how to protect themselves against the disease in their personal lives.

The first of the two tapes, entitled "The AIDS Issue," is addressed to foodservice managers and instructs them how to educate employees and how to manage situations that can arise if uninformed patrons learn that an employee has AIDS. The second tape, entitled "AIDS—What You Need to Know," is addressed to employees and explains how AIDS is contracted, emphasizing that it is not a foodborne disease and that it is not passed through casual contact. The set of tapes costs $29.95 and is available through the association's publications department at (800) 424-5156.

Current Issues Report: Tipping vs. service charge

The association's research department has published its latest in the series of *Current Issues Reports*, this one dealing with the topic of tips vs. service charges. The report looks at operator and consumer viewpoints on the subject and should prove to be useful to those of you contemplating this issue. Look in your mailbox for the report; it was sent to the association's key members last month. Additional copies are available for sale at $3 for members and $5 for nonmembers.

Please complete hourly wage survey

Also in the mail to key members is a questionnaire regarding wages for hourly employees. Please complete the questionnaire at your earliest convenience; the results will be compiled and published in an hourly wage report this fall.

New monthly consumer survey

Finally, the association has joined forces with the Gallup Organization to launch the "Foodservice Market Measure," a monthly survey report that will track consumer behavior and attitudes at foodservice outlets. The "Market Measure" will be published monthly in ***Restaurants USA.*** In addition to information on the number and demographic characteristics of adults who purchase meals for on-premises and off-premises consumption, the report will be supplemented with quarterly consumer surveys on timely topics, such as smoking vs. non-smoking sections, tipping vs. service charges and nutrition concerns.

Look for the first installment of the "Market Measure" in the September issue of ***Restaurants USA.*** The first quarterly consumer report, which will focus on consumer preferences and choices with regard to self-serve salad and food bars, will be published next month.

During May, 149 foodservice operators and suppliers joined the National Restaurant Association. Welcome. Your membership will strengthen your business and the association's efforts to represent the industry.

Sincerely,

Jim L. Peterson
President & Chairman of the Board

COVER STORY: 1988 SHOW TELLS THE TIMES

9 The annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant/Hotel-Motel Show is the most accurate timekeeper of what's happening in the industry.

10 No-Shows: Never Again, Please
Operators are angry that customers who don't honor their reservations cut into their profits, but dealing with no-shows is a complicated—and sensitive—issue. A panel of four industry leaders from the Show offers its suggestions for dealing with the no-shows problem. Also includes highlights of other educational sessions at the Show.

14 Carving Your Niche in Ice
Carvers geared in waterproof suits wielded chainsaws and raced against the clock to perfect their masterpieces during the Ice Carving Classic. The Classic made ice-carving fans of many. Although the art has been around for some time, it has new uses in today's competitive marketing environment.

18 Food from the Nile
Madame Jehan Sadat's theater presentation at the Show was the inspiration for this article describing the delicious, traditional foods from the beautiful—and mysterious—land of Egypt.

20 Imports—As Important As Ever
To import or not to import . . . for some chefs there is no question. Quality and authenticity are two of the reasons that many chefs insist on using only imported ingredients. This article explores why some chefs are so particular. Includes a sidebar on chefs who only "buy American," and a report on the international exhibitors at the Show.

24 Couscous
Couscous—the traditional North African grain—is an inspiration to U.S. chefs, who are experimenting with this versatile product in creatively delicious ways. Includes recipes.

26 Culinary Arts Salon—Two Sessions of Show and Tell
The Culinary Arts Salon at the Show was expanded to two sessions for the first time this year—doubling the pleasure for attendees. Some of the winners in the event describe the exhausting preparation that goes into competing in a culinary competition. Don't miss the sidebar—it's a timetable that could help you plan for next year's competition.

28 Learning from the Masters
Demonstrations from talented—and entertaining—chefs drew Show attendees to the popular Chefs Stage sessions. Attendees learned tips and techniques, some of which are shared here.

30 Dessert Trays—Serving Up Sweet Profits
Who can resist a beautifully displayed trayful of mouth-watering desserts brought right to the table? Not many, claim restaurateurs who find dessert trays a successful marketing tool. If you were to create a dessert tray on this year's Show floor, a sidebar tells what you might add.

32 Show Floor—What's Hot and What's Not
The products and services that appear on the Show floor let operators know "what's hot and what's not." This year's Show floor was no exception.

DEPARTMENTS

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- ☐ Winners of the Eighth Annual Main Course

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- ☐ No-salt cajun

Cover photograph by Gary Landsman; clock by Show exhibitor, Whistling Oyster, North Hollywood, California.

Association releases AIDS video education program

During the association Show in Chicago, National Restaurant Association President Jim L. Peterson announced the release of two videotapes dealing with issues surrounding the AIDS epidemic.

"It is part of our responsibility to help educate our 8 million employees about this terrible disease, to reassure them that the foodservice workplace is safe in regard to AIDS and to advise them on how to protect themselves against this illness in their personal lives," Peterson said.

The two videotapes will be sold to members in a single packet. The first tape, entitled " The AIDS Issue," is addressed to management and describes the law and court decisions relating to the employment of persons with AIDS. It then advises operators how to educate employees about the disease. Last, it describes how to prepare for and how to manage the confusion that might arise if uninformed patrons learn of an employee who has the disease.

The second tape, entitled "AIDS—What You Need to Know," is addressed to employees. Drawing on expert medical opinion, it explains how AIDS is contracted. It then explains that it is not a foodborne disease, nor is it passed through casual contact. Therefore it is not contracted in the foodservice workplace.

The two videotapes complement the brochure, "Basic Facts About AIDS for Foodservice Employees," which is already available through the association's publication department. The packet of videotapes is being sold to members for $29.95 plus 10 percent for shipping and handling.

Kacoo Olinde wins Pacesetter Award

Kacoo Olinde, co-owner and operator of six Ralph and Kacoo's Seafood Restaurants located throughout Louisiana and Texas, received this year's Pacesetter Award from the Roundtable for Women with four other award winners: Marion Illitch, Secretary/Treasurer, Little Caesar Enterprises; Beverly M. Lowe, Director of Food Services, Hampton City Schools; Virginia Mayer, President, Sun West Services and Violet G. Stancik, Vice President of Contract Sales, ALCO Foodservice Company. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the National Restaurant Association Show.

Kacoo Olinde, left, congratulated by Ella Brennan for receiving Pacesetter Award

Mark Plaatjes of Waukegan, Illinois, won the Eighth Annual Main Course Race with a time of 30.19 minutes. Among female participants, Grace Wilson of Atlanta came in first with a time of 36.12. She finished 51st overall.

Association survey on advertising now available

The National Restaurant Association has just published *Restaurant Usage of Advertising 1987* (catalog number CS650). This 43-page study, based upon a survey conducted for the association by the Gallup Organization, presents an in-depth look at the types of advertising used by restaurants as well as the usage frequency of various advertising methods by specific types of restaurants. In addition, the publication focuses on changes expected in advertising budgets and on the use of such direct mail marketing techniques as newsletters, handouts and mini-menus.

Restaurant respondents are grouped according to characteristics such as restaurant type, average meal cost, daily customer counts and menu type. Advertising mediums covered include newspapers, magazines, handouts, sponsorships, direct mail, radio, billboards, restaurant guides and television. Detailed data tables are included.

For a copy of the study, send a check or money order to the National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. The price is $15 for members and $30 for nonmembers. When ordering, please be sure to include payment plus a 10 percent shipping and handling fee and any applicable tax. Washington, DC, residents must add a 6 percent sales tax. Illinois residents must add 7 percent, and Chicago, residents must add an additional 1 percent, making their total tax 8 percent. You may charge orders by including charge card type (VISA, Diner's, etc.), name on card, card number, expiration date and signature. Call the National Restaurant Association at 1-800-424-5156 (toll-free) or (202) 331-5900 for charge card orders. *No purchase orders.*

WASHINGTONREPORT

Peterson pledges association opposition to health benefits bill

At a press conference held during the National Restaurant Association convention, newly elected association President Jim L. Peterson released survey results that show the passage of the Minimum Health Benefits Act would wipe out tens of thousands of small restaurants employing hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Peterson reported that the survey, conducted for the association by the Westat research firm, shows clearly that sales volume is the determining factor when foodservice companies decide whether to offer health coverage to employees. For instance, among companies with annual sales under $500,000, 27 percent offer health coverage to both hourly and salaried employees.

In contrast, 72 percent of foodservice companies with sales between $1 million and $5 million offer such coverage. The figure rises to 90 percent among companies with sales of $10 million and up.

"It is clear that foodservice companies with smaller sales volume simply can't afford to offer health coverage. The cost would cut too deeply into their gross sales," Peterson told reporters assembled in Chicago's McCormick Place. According to the 1982 census, 82 percent of eating place firms had a sales volume of less than $500,000.

Nineteen members of Congress came to Chicago for a two-day tour of the Show. Here, from left, association director Bernard Schreiner (Schreiner's Restaurant, Inc., Fond du Lac, WI) winds up his tour with Reps. Steve Gunderson (R-WI) and Thomas Petri (R-WI) in the Culinary Arts Salon.

The Minimum Health Benefits for All Workers Act (S. 1265 and H.R. 2508) would require all employers to provide comprehensive health benefits to all employees who work 17½ hours per week, after a waiting period of only 30 days.

In addition, employers would be required to pay at least 80 percent of the premium for most workers and 100 percent for employees earning less than $4.19 per hour.

"The kind of health coverage mandated by the bill would be inappropriate to most foodservice compa-

DCROUNDUP

□ **Minimum wage fight picks up speed.** Thousands of foodservice operators have joined in the campaign to defeat a minimum wage increase, sending more than 50,000 mailgrams, letters and cards to Congress and scheduling hundreds of district and Washington visits with their representatives.

Citing uncertain vote counts in the U.S. House of Representatives and their wish to have the Senate take some action on the issue, Democratic House leaders postponed a scheduled June 22 floor vote on H.R. 1834, the bill to raise the minimum wage to $5.05 by 1992, until mid-July. In the Senate, pressure is on to move companion legislation.

□ **President's veto sends plant closings issue back to square one but it quickly resurfaces.** Following President Reagan's May veto of the trade bill, pro-labor forces in the House and Senate moved quickly to gather support for new plant closings legislation. As this *Restaurants USA* went to press, both the House and Senate were poised to vote on newly introduced bills that would require businesses with more than 100 workers to give 60 days' advance notice of company closings or mass layoffs. (These same provisions were included in the trade bill.)

Given the president's unwavering opposition to the advance notice requirements, a presidential veto is likely. Senate Democrats predict they can muster enough votes this time to override the veto, even though they were unable to do so with the trade bill. The National Restaurant Association and other business groups continue to lobby against these burdensome requirements.

□ **Limited polygraph ban likely to become law.** President Reagan's desk is the next and final stop for H.R. 1212, a bill to ban all pre-employment and random lie detector use. The president is expected to sign off on this compromise measure, which allows employers to use the tests only to investigate specific incidents of workplace crime.

□ **"No dice," employers say to parental leave "compromise."** The numbers have changed, but the problems remain the same in watered-down parental leave legislation recently introduced by Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT), the original sponsor of the "Parental and Medical Leave Act."

Dodd's new bill, S. 2488, requires employers of 20 or more to provide workers with 10 weeks of unpaid parental leave every two years and 13 weeks of unpaid medical leave yearly. (Dodd's original proposal applied to employers of 15 or more and mandated 18 weeks of parental leave and 26 weeks of medical leave.) Eligible employees must have worked for at least a year and for at least 900 hours during the previous 12 months. The employer must continue to provide health benefits during the worker's absence.

Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee chairman Ted Kennedy (D-MA) promises June or July committee action on the new version, which is cosponsored by 21 senators.

□ **Chances look good for a one-year extension of TJTC.** Taking that important first step, the House Ways & Means Committee acted June 21 to extend the Targeted Jobs Tax Credit for one more year. The tax credit, used widely by foodservice operators who hire economically disadvantaged workers, is currently set to expire at the end of 1988. Ways & Means members approved the extension as part of the 1988 tax "technical corrections" bill, which still has to be approved by the full House and Senate.

□ **Employers liable for first-time immigration violations.** With the new phase of the immigration law that began June 1, Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) officials are no longer required to warn employers before issuing fines for illegal hiring or improper paperwork. INS inspectors—expected to number 1,850 by the end of the year, up from the current 700—will concentrate half their enforcement efforts on targeted industries, including restaurants and hotels.

—Denise Roach

nies where turnover is very high, and it would be prohibitively expensive for most firms," Peterson said. "The estimated cost of the proposed legislation would average $18,500 per year for firms with sales under $500,000.

The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee has approved the health benefits bill for consideration by the full Senate. To date, the House has held hearings on the bill, but it has not yet marked up its version.

"You can be certain that the National Restaurant Association will fight this legislation with all its resources," Peterson said. "Our legislators have to understand that putting companies out of business is no way to benefit employees."

The child care challenge

Since the 100th Congress convened last year, more than 100 bills have been introduced to increase the availability of child care, make it more affordable or improve its quality.

Increasing numbers of mothers in the workforce, the political pressure and power of "baby boom" parents and worker shortages are forcing Americans to think about ways to broaden child-care options. Congress is being forced to respond.

"Our workplaces have been slow in adapting to the new makeup of the American workforce," says Rep. Nancy Johnson (R-CT), who has introduced day care legislation in the House of Representatives. "Barely 5 percent of America's employers help their workers pay for child care. It is clear we've got to encourage more employers to follow their lead."

Child care assistance pays off for employers in areas other than recruitment and retention. Sixty-five percent of companies surveyed by the Department of Health and Human Services in 1981 said child care benefits reduced turnover. Fifty-three percent said absenteeism dropped. Fully ninety percent found that the benefit improved morale.

Federal programs to help defray child care costs include certain tax deductions and depreciation allowances for businesses that provide on-site care. More employers are also beginning to offer workers "Dependent Care Assistance Programs," an employee benefit in which workers direct up to $5,000 a year in pre-tax income to a special account used to pay child care expenses.

Even with these programs, problems remain: child care remains expensive, high-quality care is often difficult to find and employer-supported care is relatively rare.

Congressional bills

At center stage in Congress are comprehensive Democrat and Republican schemes that attack the child care problem in very different ways. Democrat Sen. Christopher Dodd (CT) and Rep. Dale Kildee (MI), have introduced a $2.5 billion plan backed by dozens of labor and child advocacy groups. This "Act for Better Child Care Services" uses most of its federal funds to decrease child care expenses for low-income Americans. The act would create first-ever federal standards for licensed day care operations.

The GOP alternative, proposed by Sen. Hatch and Rep. Johnson, is a more local and community-oriented measure with a first-year price tag of $375 million. States would receive $250 million in block grants to dole out at their discretion—by giving to communities, to nonprofit groups, to groups of small businesses, etc. Remaining dollars would fund liability insurance pools to provide insurance to day care operators and a revolving loan fund so at-home caregivers could bring homes into accordance with state licensing standards.

The Hatch/Johnson legislation also makes tax changes to encourage businesses to provide day care benefits for employees. The measure allows businesses a 25 percent write-off for the cost of constructing on-site day care facilities and requires businesses offering cafeteria benefit plans to include child care benefits as an option. The legislation would also set up a national awards program to honor businesses whose work policies are helpful to parents.

Among the myriad other proposals is one incentive program aimed directly at small businesses. Legislation introduced by Rep. Lynn Martin (R-IL) would offer tax credits and federal grants to small businesses that group together to provide child care for employees. These "consortium" arrangements are increasingly popular, especially in malls and office complexes.

❑

The annual National Restaurant Association Restaurant/Hotel-Motel Show is the most accurate timekeeper of what's happening in the industry. New ideas, new products and new techniques all find their way to the Show, and each year operators decide which to pay attention to. Some ideas start out small and within a year or two explode into major trends, such as frozen yogurt, the cruvinet or bottled water. Others pass away—remember the robot sushi maker or the elongated egg? But whether they find a trend or a novelty, restaurateurs can pick and choose, and adapt what they see to fit their operation—just the way ***Restaurants USA*** *does with its Show coverage. This year, instead of keeping the feature stories separate from the Show Report,* ***Restaurants USA*** *combined the two. After all, the Show tells the times for* ***Restaurants USA,*** *too.*

Armed with a chainsaw, John Metz chairman of the Convention Committee, cuts this year's icy ribbon. The unorthodox approach was an appropriate opening for this year's Show, which brought ice carving to the attention of Show attendees in the sportslike atmosphere of the Ice Carving Classic.

Tom Brokaw's keynote address at the Opening Day ceremonies focused on the importance of participating in the political process—especially during an election year. "Every four years you have a chance to shape your destiny, so make certain that your voice is heard," he said.

Outgoing President Michael Grisanti urged restaurateurs to tell legislators their views on crucial political issues. Grisanti emphasized the importance of grassroots political activity throughout his tenure as president.

NO-SHOWS

NEVER AGAIN, PLEASE

All operators want to take advantage of those times when they can have a full house. It's a nightmare when they know they can fill the house but have empty tables waiting because people have not honored their reservations. "When we make a reservation, we have a contract. Unfortunately, it seems to be a one-way contract," said Paul Lazar, owner of the Wharf Tavern in Warren, Rhode Island, and moderator of the no-shows panel at the Show. "We need a way to get that idea across to our customers. How do we do that?" Lazar asked and turned to the three panelists for ideas. Here is what they had to say on the subject.

Leslee Reis, Cafe Provencale, Evanston, Illinois: We have 23 tables, 80 seats. We are 11 years old and have always been a reservation restaurant. We book 100 percent of our tables, and I never overbook. The average check is about $55 to $60 per person, not including tax and tip.

Very soon after we opened, I noticed that people didn't seem to think making a reservation obligated them to anything more than what they wanted to do when it was time for them to leave their house. And we, of course, have planned staff in the kitchen and in the dining room to attend to them. It bothered me because I'm someone who always keeps my word.

So I started a list on our computer. We have an IBM-compatible system with modems that operate in our three restaurants and in an office outside of the restaurants that connects all three. When we first got the computer about six years ago, we started keeping a list at Cafe Provencale of people who did not show up and did not have the courtesy to call. We alphabetize that list, and we mark the day of the week and the size of the party so we have a chance to track the times that we are most vulnerable to no-shows. If someone does not show twice, then his or her name is capitalized, and it goes to the top of the list. After two years, we purge the names if they haven't repeated their no-show behavior.

Our no-shows list is about four pages long, and there are about 300 names on it. We keep it in a clear binder by the reservation book. It is used by the two people who are the primary takers of reservations—the office manager in the day and the maitre d' in the evening. No one else is allowed to take a reservation. They must put the party on hold.

Both people are fairly familiar with the list. If customers call after one no-show they get a gentle reminder that they did not keep their reservations, and we explain that in order for us to stay open to serve them, we need to know if they're not going to come. It's not a vindictive kind of thing. I think part of our job is to educate our clientele that we are running a business, even though going to dinner for them is their recreation. The public just doesn't think of it in the same way that we do.

More important, about five years ago, we began a policy of reconfirming on Fridays and Saturdays and on other nights when we are full or close to full. But the system really took off two years ago when we added mandatory cancellation at 2:00 p.m. if they didn't reconfirm.

On weekdays we take the responsibility of reconfirming—unless it is an out-of-town or a hotel party. Any reservation from out of town or a hotel must be reconfirmed by 2:00 p.m.—whether it's a party of two or a party of 12—or we automatically cancel.

Although the onus of reconfirming the reservation is on our customers, we have a person whose entire job is to make callbacks. So at the most 20 percent of the reconfirmations are made by our guests and 80 percent are made by us.

Each time we call and no one answers, we put a little slash mark next to the name, so if the customer comes to the door on Saturday night and says, "What do you mean you gave my table away? No one told me," I will say, "I'm very sorry that we had a misunderstanding. I am secure in the fact that someone did tell you and that only three people take

Operators are angry that [illegible] are hurting their businesses. Each of these four industry leaders offered suggestions for handling the no-show problem.

reservations in the restaurant, the owner, the office manager and the maitre d'."

And, moreover, we never erase our reservation information. If we rebook a table, we have a space for tables that are rebooked. So I can say, "In fact, I took your reservation two weeks ago, and I see a notation in my handwriting that you agreed to call back. We tried calling you six times today." Because our system is so comprehensive, I don't feel a bit guilty about refilling a table that has not been reconfirmed.

Over the past four years, these two techniques have cut down our no-shows by 80 percent during prime time. That has saved us $112,000.

Credit card guarantee update

There are people in the industry who are working with American Express to see if we can come up with a contract similar to the one that people sign with hotels: You give your American Express number so that you have a room set aside for you even if your plane is two hours late or you get lost on the highway. That is a guarantee, and it is a valid charge.

Gordon Sinclair, from Gordon Restaurant in Chicago, has been pursuing this with American Express. He is asking for a $15 per person charge to guarantee a table for five people or more unless the reservation is cancelled 24 hours in advance.

So if you honor American Express, and guarantees are something that you are interested in doing, speak to your local representatives about it. There is strength in numbers.

—Leslee Reis

Barry Wine, The Quilted Giraffe, New York, New York: I have a small restaurant in New York City that until we moved nine months ago had only 17 tables and no bar. We now have 27 tables and seat 85 people. And we have a bar. The average ticket in our restaurant is $115 per person before taxes and a service charge.

Reservations and the worry about no-shows have always been a very big concern to us because of the size of the ticket. We were lucky enough to operate at what we call full capacity: There is always a demand for a table, and we book 100 percent of our space. We don't hold back any tables.

Although we don't expect anyone to have to wait for a table, we have brought our no-show percentage down to just about zero. But we do it at a significant cost—by hiring people to answer the telephone.

Starting at 10:00 a.m., my wife answers the telephone until 2:00 p.m. A full-time person comes in at 2:00 p.m. and answers the telephone all afternoon. No one else can take a reservation—not even I. My wife and the other staff person who takes reservations are at the door in the evening so nobody ever walks in and says, "Well, I talked to somebody else and they said we could have a table." I think it's probably a good idea for the person answering the phone to have some involvement at the front door.

There's a significant labor cost and telephone cost in running this system. We reconfirm all of our tables. We ask customers to call us by 4:00 p.m.; but starting at 2:00 p.m., and earlier if it's a party bigger than four, we call our reservations even if it's a toll call to Chicago or Los Angeles to make sure they are coming.

The real lesson that we've learned is that not just anyone can take a reservation. You can't just say, "Oh, hello, you want a table for four on Saturday at 8 o'clock? What's the name?" You have to teach the person who's answering the phone how to take the reservation, and it probably has to be a very high-paid person. We've learned over a period of time that if somebody calls and says, "Do you have cherries jubilee for dessert?" or "Can I have a prime rib or steak au poivre?" that person probably doesn't want to come to our restaurant. And my wife or the maitre'd who answers the phone is going to carry on a dialogue to make sure that they know where they're going.

We're very careful if we take reservations from concierges. By and large, we don't want the concierge to do that. Our experience has told us that the concierge has a list of restaurants to call during the afternoon and say, "Please confirm Mr. Smith's reservation for 8 o'clock tonight." We're much more likely to call the hotel, find out if Mr. Smith is in fact at the hotel, and aggressively make sure that Mr. Smith is coming to dinner.

The same thing is essentially true of taking reservations from a secretary. If it's clear to us from the kinds of questions being asked that the person doesn't really know the restaurant, we would not take a reservation from a secretary for a party of eight, for example. And we would insist on talking to the boss to try to establish the one-to-one relationship so the person making the reservation feels an obligation to come to the restaurant.

It's a lot of time spent, and it's a lot of highly paid people spending that time, but it has reduced our no-shows to almost nothing.

Piero Selvaggio, Valentino, Santa Monica, California: Sixteen years ago, with a lot of enthusiasm and no money, I opened a little restaurant—Valentino—in Santa Monica, California. It grew and eventually became a serious restaurant that accommodates 130 people. Many years after, out of a personal desire to prove myself and to do something else, I opened a second, 80-seat restaurant, based on appetizers only—Primi in West Los Angeles.

The two restaurants are popular. They are part of a group of restaurants that people put on their dining map when they come to Los Angeles.

I take reservations in both restaurants, and sometimes I wonder why. The first question I ask my manager at Primi when I call him from Valentino at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday night is not, "How many dinners did you do tonight?" but, "How many people didn't show?" I am angry. I'll give you an example to show you what the frustration is like.

A lady calls me from New Jersey. She wants a wedding rehearsal dinner for her son who lives in California. She checks me out, so to speak, for a party of about 32 people. I spend a good hour on the phone explaining all of the things we do, all of the things we can do. After an hour, I get the impression that she's quite pleased with my restaurant as a potential site for the dinner. Ten phone calls later, after we have discussed flowers, linen and so forth, we get to the day before the date set for the party. I call the New Jersey number, but don't get an answer. I call the son, who seems surprised to hear from me. "We are getting married," he confirms, "but we're having the party at this other restaurant tomorrow." I feel cheated and shocked.

We have tried to guarantee reservations with credit cards, but I've been refused the charges I have presented because the customer always says, "I wasn't there. This is not my signature. Why should I be penalized?" We have a so-called blacklist, but I don't think it's going to take us very far because there are too many people that still need to be educated.

Paul Lazar, Wharf Tavern, Warren, Rhode Island: Let me tell you a little bit about the restaurant that I have. It's called the Wharf Tavern. It's in Rhode Island. It's on the waterfront. It's somewhat more casual than the three restaurants you've heard about. We have about 300 seats, including the function rooms. We have two floors. We're very seasonal. It's much busier from May until September; in fact, our season really starts next week. We just built an outside deck to accommodate another 150 people, and we have boats and yachts pull up next to the restaurant. We're very much a destination restaurant; we're close to two major metropolitan areas, but we're in a tiny little town of 16,000. The restaurant is a converted oyster house that has been a restaurant for 34 years, and so it's been well established.

We do take reservations, and we have certain periods of time, certainly in the summer, when we would prefer to be 100 percent reservations; however, it's difficult for us to do

The audience laughs along with Herb True at his Show seminar. Edutrainer True explains that Quantum Management is a transformation of a hodgepodge of 20th Century fads and behavior theories to a 21st century manager who sees and sells a vision while managing for perpetuity.

Fresh-bake concepts have staying power

Is the demand for on-premises fresh baked goods a passing fad? Not according to Andrew Thorburn, president and CEO of Restaurant Management Inc. As the national licensor for Treats, an on-premises bakery concept, Thorburn speculates that the demand for freshly-baked delights is here to stay. "The public is looking for more affordable self-indulgent treats like food and flowers as the prices for Broadway shows and other luxury items skyrocket," he told an audience at the Show. Appearing on a panel of on-premises bakery owners Thorburn pointed to his own six-year-old concept. Started by two women in Toronto who sold hand-dipped chocolates and oversized muffins, Treats now operates 101 outlets in Canada and 19 in the United States. Muffins account for 50 percent of company sales. "With 50 to 60 muffin variations, we sell a product people can eat every day," Thorburn said.

"I think part of our job is to educate our clientele that we are running a business, even though for them going to dinner is their recreation. The public just doesn't think of it in the same way that we do."

that. People tend to pull up in a boat and say, "Geez, you got room for six?"

I agree that whoever answers the phone is a very, very important factor in the reservations picture. One of the problems we find is that everyone wants a waterfront table. We have a policy that we will not promise a waterfront table, and it's written on the top page of the reservation book so my people know exactly how to say it. "We will do the very best we can, but we cannot promise you a waterfront table." And we still get people who say, "She absolutely told me I will have a waterfront table, I've got guests in here from Europe, and I just gotta show them the water." ❑

Robert Christie Mill, University of Denver, uses magic and his Scottish wit to present his session on management strategies. Author of an upcoming book on organizational climate, Mill contends there are four management strategies that, when applied at the right time, will solve all the problems a manager can have with employees.

Basic supervision

Managing is a skill that can be learned, but as with any skill, you have to practice it to gain effectiveness, said Jack Miller in his seminar at the Chicago Show. According to Miller, an effective manager does the following:

- ☐ *Expects only the best and gives the best.* Gives people a chance to succeed or fail.
- ☐ *Establishes management ethics in dealings with people.* Is honest and fair and does not make promises that can't be kept. "Don't try to be popular; try to do what is right," Miller said.
- ☐ *Challenges subordinates* to grow and improve themselves.
- ☐ *Possesses technical skills,* such as the ability to train and motivate employees and to solve problems.
- ☐ *Has a distinctive management style* that employees can recognize and count on.
- ☐ *Strives for maturity and sensitivity in dealing with others* by keeping his or her temper under control and not panicking.

In sum

A manager must do more than read a book about management, said Miller. He or she must take theories and convert them into practical application, taking into account all the different factors, such as the working environment and human psychology. "The bottom line is getting your people to willingly do the things you want them to do," he said.

He added that his two-tiered franchising system, which allows franchises to participate in area revenue-sharing, is unusual in the United States.

Jeffrey Newman, vice president of franchise operations for Vie de France Restaurant Corp., gave an example of how a bakery concept can grow into a full-service restaurant chain. Begun in 1972 by a group of frustrated French-bread aficionados, the company added restaurants six years later primarily to provide examples of how to use its baked items. Newman describes Vie de France as three corporations in one: bakeries, cafeterias and full service restaurants. Currently running 58 restaurants, the company plans to have 200 in operation within the next three years.

When asked about their keys to success, panel members unequivocally responded, "fresh, quality products." But they disagreed on the benefits of single-item marketing. "Simplicity attracts. A limited menu is easier to control," insisted Gayle Powell. Powell, founder of Ms. Powell's, Inc., began selling her home-baked cinnamon rolls at the Idaho state fair. She now operates 50 cinnamon-roll bakeshops in 20 states that sell cinnamon rolls exclusively. But Andrew Thorburn maintained menu variety is a necessity to expand appeal. Traffic patterns in speciality bake shops tend to be strongest in the morning, slow at lunch and moderate during the late afternoon hours. When luncheon items are added, noontime traffic is "reasonably good," says Thorburn.

"History has shown that no one stays with just one product. My feeling is that survival will require product proliferation," said Ken Hill, president of 220-unit T.J. Cinnamons of Kansas City, Missouri. Newman, whose restaurants experience heavy lunch traffic, says although his downtown locations are destination units, most office workers will not walk more than two blocks for lunch. "Believe it or not," he exlaimed, "we have four stores in a six-block radius in downtown Washington, DC." ❑

CARVING YOUR NICHE IN ICE

by Paul Moomaw

Show attendees who witnessed the National Restaurant Association Ice Carving Classic were enthralled by the making of the crystal sculptures. This was no tame display, but an action-packed sporting event with chainsaws buzzing, ice chips flying and carvers working against the clock.

The Mexican team used its five 400-pound blocks of ice to create a multi-block display that looked like a work from a Mayan temple. "We wanted to bring some of Mexico with us," said team captain Michel Ange, a chef from Acapulco.

Paul Moomaw is a communications specialist at the National Restaurant Association.

With a steady hand, the chef cuts through two feet of ice with a chainsaw. Amidst a snowy spray, a winged eagle emerges, and the 400-pound block of ice turns into a work of art that will melt but will not be soon forgotten. This is ice carving, a resurrected art form that has new uses as a marketing tool at a time when operators are looking for ways to stand out from their competitors.

Because all ice carvings are unique works, they offer restaurant and hotel operators a chance to create a distinctive buffet table, catering display or party centerpiece. And the sculptures that one designs with a chainsaw can be as ambitious or as understated as the occasion demands. Most ice carvers are chefs, many of whom learned the skill in a culinary school. Almost anyone can attain some degree of proficiency at ice carving, either by trial and error or by attending a school that teaches ice carving, such as the Ice Sculpture School of Chicago. You don't have to be a carver yourself to take advantage of ice carving, although you will miss out on some fun if you don't carve.

Ice carving is back

Ice carving was probably brought to the United States by Scandinavians and has been used in cold-weather spots like St. Paul, Minnesota, for generations as outdoor decoration for winter carnivals. A big change in the world of ice carving occurred with the advent of electric refrigeration. With refrigeration, carvings could be made ahead of time and kept frozen until time for display. When hotel dining was at its finest in the United States, some 30 or 40 years ago, a stunning ice carving was considered necessary as the focal point of the buffet table at any party or banquet. Hotels and restaurants prided themselves on having a chef who was a master carver.

But ice carving was a laborious process until the chainsaw became accepted as a carving tool. The chainsaw is quick and efficient, and it makes smooth cutting of long stretches of ice easy. Advanced carvers now use the chainsaw during most of their carving time, even for detail work. "The chainsaw is fast," says ice carver Jim Nadeau, "but it's also clean. When you're making a straight line with manual tools, 10 inches is forever. With a chainsaw, I can make 3½-minute swans, 4½-minute eagles and 25-minute grand pianos with the top up."

Most people are surprised to learn that the chainsaw is the instrument of choice for most ice carvers. It seems a brutal, noisy tool to use in creating works that are so beautiful and sometimes delicate. But the widespread use of the chainsaw has made carving easier and faster. Professionals even use the chainsaw for minute details such as ruffling the feathers on a swan or carving an eye on the face of a peacock. In spite of the loud noise, these delicate birds don't seem to mind having chainsaw blades working on their wings.

How to make a sculpure

To begin you need ice. And that's not as simple as it sounds. Jim Nadeau has been carving for 13 years and is president of Nadeau's Ice Sculptures in LaGrange, Illinois. He says that the quality of commercial ice available around the country varies a great deal, and ice houses seem to be closing down by the dozens. "Chicago has good ice," says Nadeau, "and Detroit has good ice. But ice varies in quality from city to city. The problem is air; air gets in and turns the ice white." Needless to say, ice carvers are always looking for the clearest ice available, to give their sculptures a crystalline effect.

The second thing you need is an idea. Swans, fish and birds are frequently carved, but you are limited only by your imagination. Seasonal carvings, such as snowmen, jack-o'-lanterns and wild turkeys can give a holiday touch to an event. Because ice sculptures are often used to showcase food, many food-related themes are appropriate: an ice punch bowl, with or without flowers frozen into the ice, a wedding cake or even a sturdy wine rack which can hold bottles of champagne.

Because no one will see you during the carving phase, all forms of cheating are permitted and encouraged.

The U.S. Plymouth team is ready to begin the team freestyle competition, and judge Dean Jaramillo explains the rules.

Each team has one ton of ice and three hours to work. The first step is to lay out a paper template of what they will carve.

Out comes the chainsaw, and the carver follows the paper template as he sculpts the ice.

The chainsaw is quick and efficient, and it makes smooth cutting of long stretches of ice easy.

Team captain Mark Daukas adds texture to a sculpted horse with a handsaw, one of the many other tools of the trade.

Experienced carvers can, of course, sculpt their pieces freehand, but others prefer to work from a paper sketch. A paper template of exact size can be drawn and adhered to a block of ice to serve as an outline for the initial stages of carving. Some carvers sketch their templates on graph paper to be sure that the template's proportions are correct.

The carver begins by chainsawing around the template outline, as ice spray shoots from the blade of the chainsaw in all directions. This step eliminates unworkable ice, which drops to the floor in chunks.

Additional sculpting is then done with either chisels or the chainsaw, depending on the carver's preference. At first, the carver merely defines the outline of the subject to be carved, saving the delicate textural additions until last. Unless you are carving in a freezer or in cold weather, the sculpture is melting as it is carved. Temperature affects the carving strategy a great deal, as the sculptor must exaggerate certain features to ensure that the detail won't have melted by the time the piece is shown.

U.S. team triumphs in Ice Carving Classic

The United States team of master ice carvers representing Plymouth, Michigan, was named Grand Champion in the National Restaurant Association Ice Carving Classic, produced in cooperation with the National Ice Carving Association.

Six three-man teams competed in the first-ever Ice Carving Classic, including teams from Singapore, Mexico and two teams each from the United States and Canada. "The Ice Carving Classic showcased tremendous talent and turned a lot of bystanders into ice carving fans," said John Metz, 1988 National Restaurant Association Convention Chairman. "The competition built to a fever pitch during the final two days, with chainsaws whirring and flashbulbs flashing.

All the classic's events were timed, adding a competitive edge. The U.S. Plymouth team took this competitive spirit to heart, treating the four days of carving as a sports event. Each day the Plymouth team girded themselves for carving in matching jumpsuits, baseball batting gloves, kneepads and weightlifting belts. They even stretched their muscles while waiting for the word "go" at the beginning of their competitions.

The approaches of the different teams were a study in contrast. The team of carvers from Singapore carved in a traditional style, using manual chisels for most of their work, opting for the chainsaw only for major breakdowns of ice. Meanwhile, the U.S. Plymouth team was an assembly line of chainsaws, breaking down their 400-pound blocks of ice into smaller chunks that were formed together in the final minutes of each round to create multi-block displays. For these carvers, ice sculpting became as much a science as an art. The U.S. team's efforts climaxed in the team freestyle competition, where they turned their ton of ice into a work they called "Olympus," which featured both a unicorn and a winged horse. At the same time, Mexico's Michel Ange was calmly walking around his team's sculpture-in-progress, occasionally talking to onlookers about its status, then returning for some chainsaw refinement.

The teams from Singapore and Mexico both used the team freestyle event as a chance to show some national pride. The Mexican team used its five 400-pound blocks of ice to create a multi-block display that looked like a work from a Mayan temple. "We wanted to bring some of Mexico with us," said team captain Ange, a chef from Acapulco. The team from Singapore carved a sculpture symbolizing international unity that featured Singapore's national symbol, the merlion, flanked by two American eagles with wings spread.

The Singapore team was named first runner-up overall, and the U.S. team from Nordic Hills was named second runner-up. In the individual freestyle event, each competitor had two hours and a 400-pound block of ice with which to create a carving. Johnny Woo of the Canada/Canmore team was named champion in the individual freestyle competition. Clemente Arellano of Mexico was first runner-up, and Mark Daukas of the U.S. Plymouth team was second runner-up.

As in less ephemeral art forms, carvers add finishing touches and detail.

The clock ticks away, as the team works to complete the multi-block display.

The judges gather around the completed sculpture

The cost of carving

Despite its creative possibilities, ice carving can be an expensive activity if you obtain all the recommended materials. Boots with steel toes are necessary to protect the feet from falling chunks of ice and to prevent slipping on the wet surface that usually surrounds a work in progress. Gloves of some kind should be worn as well—whether rubber gloves, which are favored for their waterproof qualities, or baseball batting gloves chosen for their flexibility. A waterproof apron keeps ice chips from drenching the carver's clothing, and goggles protect the eyes. Because of the popularity of the chainsaw in ice carving, a pair of earmuffs is a good investment to protect against ear fatigue induced by hours of chainsaw use in a confined area.

And then there is the chainsaw itself. Ice carvers don't use just any chainsaw that a lumberjack hands them. Carvers prefer special saws that have five or six times the revolutions per minute of the standard variety. The extra RPMs make for smoother cutting. Many prefer the Japanese Makita brand, which is no longer available in the United States.

To make delicate finishing touches and to add texture, a number of manual finishing tools are usually used. Most carvers have several chisels, wood-carving tools, an ice shaver and a hand pruning saw as part of their carving apparatus. Although these tools may seem simple, they can be expensive, easily running into the $100 range. Increasingly popular is the electric drill, which is used to make holes and add texture. Not to be forgotten among the list of crucial tools is the traditional set of large ice tongs, which all carvers use to move large chunks of ice around in the workspace.

Another consideration when getting involved in ice carving is liability in case of an accident at the place of display. Ice carvings are heavy, and they are often placed on tables or pedestals from where they could fall. Ice carvings also melt, of course, so there is the possibility of people slipping in puddles of melted ice. Carver Jim Nadeau was glad his company carried liability insurance when a leaking tray ruined a large oak conference table at the site of a display.

Transportation of sculptures is another matter to consider if the sculptures are to be carved somewhere other than the place of display. Sculptures to be transported must be left fairly thick by the carver in order to withstand the stress of travel. They must be securely fastened for travel, and refrigerated trucks make a long haul possible.

All these variables add up to a lot of time and money spent on ice sculpture. If it sounds like too much hassle, but you still want to cash in on the marketing advantages of ice carving, consider hiring a freelance carver to add to your operation's display presentation or catering package. Hotel chefs are the most likely to be ice carvers, but some independent carvers are now doing the job full time. Although these people may charge several hundred dollars for a large carving, you can pass along the cost to customers, who are getting a customized display for their event.

Taking your sculptures to market

Jim Nadeau is one of the few Americans who can claim ice carving as his sole profession. As president of Nadeau's Ice Sculptures, Nadeau supervises a staff of carvers who provide sculptures to hotels, wedding parties and other customers year-round.

But hotels aren't Nadeau's only customers. Ice carving has made its way into television commercials, onto magazine covers and into art museum openings.

Nadeau believes that for a banquet or catering operation, ice sculpture is a great way to set your company apart from others. He suggests that if you are having trouble selling customers on the idea of an ice sculpture, don't charge for it separately. Simply include it in the price of your standard catering package. Once customers have enjoyed a catered function with an ice carving, they will return to you for another custom-catered event. ❑

"Olympus," which features a unicorn and a winged horse.

The champion U.S. Plymouth team is joyously triumphant.

A new boost for the ephemeral art

Ice carving has gotten a recent boost, thanks to the formation of the National Ice Carving Association (NICA). This organization was formed to promote the art of ice sculpture through education, competition and standardized judging and exhibitions. In focusing on competition, NICA is broadening the ice carving audience by treating it as a sport as well as an art. "Ice carving is attractive to sports enthusiasts," says Chuck Wagner, executive director of NICA and president of Wagner Ice Services in Willowbrook, Illinois. "It combines a physically demanding event with art—much like figure skating," he says. "The key," adds Wagner, "is to get the kids interested who are coming out of culinary schools."

An international political activist, Jehan Sadat worked closely with her husband Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in his quest for peace, and she has continued that quest since his death. She has been active in the women's movement both in her own country and throughout the world, and she is responsible for the Egyptian civil rights law, which brought greater liberties to Egyptian women. She is a teacher and scholar of Arabic literature and has campaigned intensively for eradication of world illiteracy. Sadat was a Show-stopper in Chicago. Her favorite American foods are stuffed turkey, pumpkin pie and sweet-potato casserole with marshmallow topping.

When Jehan Sadat was 16 years old and newly married, she and her husband Anwar had little money and were unsure of their future. Feeling downhearted, they took a walk one night through the town of Roda where they were living. Outside a cafe they encountered a gypsy fortune-teller, and Jehan thought it would cheer her husband up if she were to have her fortune read. When the gypsy told her she would one day be First Lady of Egypt, they both laughed; but throughout her life, Madame Sadat remembered that prophecy and came to consider it her duty to help people through her position.

Madame Sadat is lecturing throughout the United States to raise money to build a library in honor of her late husband, Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt at the time he was assassinated in 1981. When Sadat made a special presentation at the National Restaurant Association Show, her reputation as "First Lady of the World" for her work to promote world peace and the rights of women had preceded her, and she was greeted with enthusiastic applause as she approached the dais. In her speech, she described her efforts to increase understanding between the people of her country and the rest of the world. Not surprisingly, Sadat talked about peace and the obstacles that stand in its way. "I am indeed happy to be with you today and to be able to address you on a subject that is close to my heart—my late husband's peace mission, and my own belief in peace," she said.

Sadat went on to describe the character of her husband and that of the Egyptian people, which led him to take up the peace mission that eventually cost him his life. "I am doing this to let our friends know about our country and traditions so they will understand us more, will know how we think," Sadat explained. She talked about Sadat's faith in God, his country and the basic goodness of people, which expressed itself in his doctrine of dignity and equality. As Sadat told her rapt audience, this belief is very much in keeping with the national character of the Egyptian people: "For thousands of years the people to which I belong have lived frugally and peacefully in the Nile Valley," Sadat said. "We never lost sight of the human dimension in ourselves, our enemies and the people of the world . . . this Egyptian preparedness may explain the miracle of our survival through the ages."

Egyptian food reflects the country's ability to embrace many diverse peoples—the Bedouins, the Greeks, the Romans, the Turks, the Arabs and the Europeans. It is rich in vegetables, legumes, spices and the ubiquitous pistachio, which finds its way into savory and sweet dishes.

In fact, an American restaurateur could offer an entire meal of Egyptian dishes, from the opaque green soup *melokhia* to a pistachio rice-flour pudding.

Appetizers—a meal in themselves

One of the great treats of eating Middle Eastern style is the *mazzah*, literally a tableful of many dishes of food. Usually served as a first course, it can also be a meal in itself, including such well-known vegetarian dishes as *baba-ghannuj*, a smoke-flavored eggplant dip; *hummus*, a dip made from mashed, cooked chickpeas flavored with lemon juice, garlic and *tahini*, a sesame seed paste; *wera einab* or stuffed grape leaves; *tabbulah*, a salad made from cracked wheat, parsley and mint; and pita bread, the flat unleavened bread whose "pockets" have made it a household word in the United States. Nuts, fried cheese, olives, roasted chickpeas, eggplant stuffed with a sour milk cheese, or a plate of slices of onion and tomato garnished with chopped parsley or mint could also be included, as could one or more distinctly Egyptian dish.

Melokhia, ta'amia and *ful medames* "are three dishes that are to Egypt what pizza is to Italy," says Charlie Sahadi, who serves many Egyptian customers at his import company on Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue in New York.

Melokhia is a thick green soup that harkens back to the pharaohs. (Ancient tablets show early Egyptians preparing this dish.) Made from the leaves of a green, jutelike plant, its flavor resembles spinach, which is, in fact, a satisfactory substitute for the melokhia leaves.

Ta'amia, or *falafel*, as it is called in the rest of the Arab world, is a vegetable burger made of dried white broad beans, strongly spiced and deep fried, and usually served with tahini or sesame paste. As croquettes, ta'amia can be tasty appetizers, but when ta'amia is stuffed into pita bread with salad ingredients, it makes a refreshing summer sandwich.

Ful medames, the favorite breakfast food of most Egyptians, is a dish consisting of dried brown beans, soaked overnight, cooked for a long time and eaten with olive oil, fresh parsley and lemon. It

Julie Fintel is a contributor to ***Restaurants USA.***

FOOD FROM THE NILE

by Julie Fintel

can be transformed into a salad by adding tomatoes.

Although fruits and vegetables are key players in the Egyptian diet, meats have their place. Lamb is the main meat of the Middle East. Islam prohibits the eating of pork, and there is not enough pastureland to raise much cattle. A favorite way of cooking the lamb is on skewers, as kebabs.

Pigeon—a favorite

Fowl comes next. Egyptians are fond of chicken, and stuffed wild duck when available, but the most commonly eaten bird is pigeon—not the city-park type but a domesticated variety. In fact, there are Egyptian restaurants that serve nothing but pigeon. Egyptians like to cook pigeon in a stew or with *fireek*, cracked wheat gathered green, dried and flavored with cream, garlic, butter and onion. The fireek can be either a stuffing or a "nest" in which the pigeon is cooked. When used as a nest, the fireek becomes a brown, crusty mound but the pigeon inside stays moist and succulent.

With their proximity to the Nile, the Red Sea, the lakes of the Delta and the Mediterranean, it is no wonder that Egyptians are great lovers of fish. From the Delta comes the *buri*, a grey mullet that can be served fresh or dried and salted, and whose eggs are made into *batrakh*, a kind of caviar. According to food writer Lesley Blanch, Egyptian fish dishes are primarily Mediterranean in style. Sometimes a large fish, such as a bass, will be stuffed with onions, parsley and other herbs and smothered in tahini. This dish, known as *saidia*, can be eaten hot or cold.

Spices of all sorts are used in Egyptian food; it is said that at one time Cairo had its choice of more than 200 of the world's aromatics. Egyptians still shop for spices at the bazaars found in every town. Yet the food is not overly spicy—not so hot as the foods of India or Mexico. Sesame seeds, cardamom, dried limes, mastic, nutmeg, saffron, coriander, sumac and tamarind (a prominent spice in worcestershire sauce) are some of the spices most often used in Egyptian food.

Eggplant is the favorite vegetable of the Middle East, but Egyptians also like okra, calling it *bamia*, which means ladies' fingers. Other vegetables come in the form of salads, often in a yogurt dressing. Fruits grow in profusion in Egypt's warm climate, and figs, dates, apricots, mangoes and melons are popular desserts, as are fruit ices and sherbet.

Like other Middle Easterners, Egyptians have a sweet tooth and enjoy rich pastries made with honey, nuts, dried fruit and rose water; but these are eaten between—not with—meals. Honey cakes, puddings and scented rice are some favorites. Some popular confections include *konafa*, made with shredded wheat and stuffed with pistachios, sugar and different kinds of syrup; *kattef*, a puff pastry filled with either cream or raisins or sugar and *zalabia*, tiny, light crisp golden fritters soaked in orange blossom and rose-scented syrup.

Since Islam forbids alcoholic drinks and cooking with alcohol, coffee often takes on the social function of alcohol. Often called "the wine of Islam," coffee is usually flavored with cardamom and can be ordered unsweetened, very sweet or medium sweet. Tea, always served in glasses, is also popular, and in the winter it is sometimes laced with ginger.

MELOKHIA SOUP

Serves 3

This soup is traditionally prepared from the deep-green melokhia leaf, which is difficult to find, so this recipe substituted Swiss chard or spinach. The addition of yogurt is also an unconventional, but delicious, variation on the theme.

Ingredients:

- 12 cups chopped Swiss chard or spinach leaves, washed well and spun dry
- 1 cup peeled, seeded and chopped cucumber
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 tspn. sugar
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 tspns. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup plain yogurt

Method:

In a large saucepan cook the Swiss chard and the cucumber in the oil over moderate heat, stirring until the chard is wilted. Add stock, sugar and garlic. Bring the liquid to a boil, and simmer the mixture, covered, for 13 to 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. In a blender or food processor purée the mixture in batches, transfer the purée to a saucepan and stir in fresh lemon juice, yogurt and salt and pepper to taste. Heat the soup over moderately low heat, stirring it until it is hot, but do not let it boil.

Recipe taken from an article by Lesley Blanch, "Flavors of the Nile," in the April 1986 issue of *Gourmet*.

For Americans—just a little

For the restaurant owner who wants to bring a taste of Egypt or the Middle East to his or her menu, Joyce Goldstein, owner and chef of Square One Restaurant in San Francisco, advises restraint.

"In our experience, Americans are not ready for a full menu of Arabic food," says Goldstein, who often features ethnic food in her restaurant. She will add just a couple of Middle Eastern dishes to her regular selections. For instance, she might offer a mazzah platter, a whole array of Middle Eastern hors d'oeuvres. Or she will concoct an adaptation of a Middle Eastern food, such as her Turkish-coffee ice cream, which contains ice cream, coffee, cardamom and rose water.

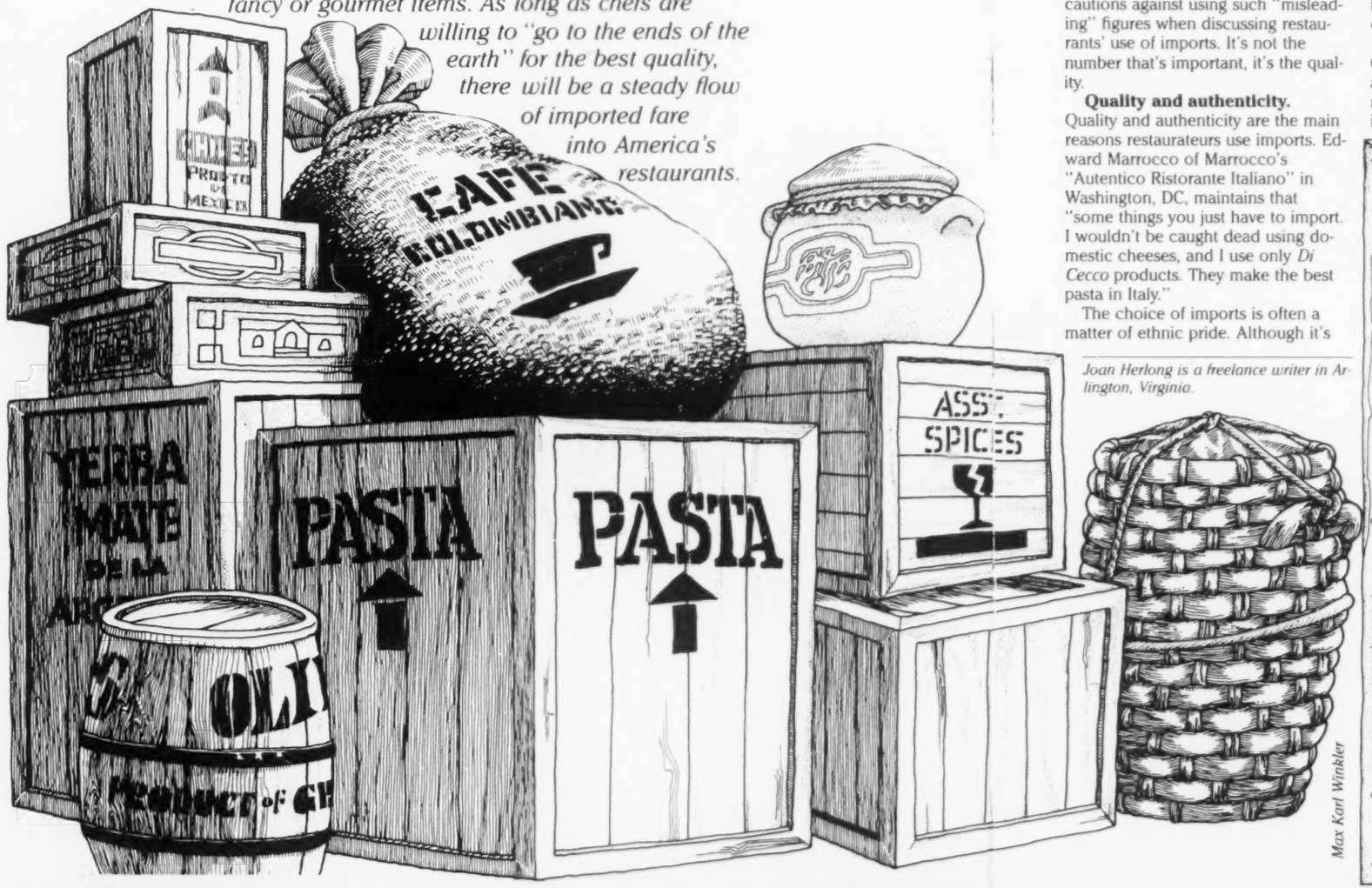
Michel Richard, the chef-owner of Citrus in Los Angeles, also likes to adapt ethnic recipes. For example, he has devised a Mediterranean ravioli in which he stuffs the ravioli with fresh goat cheese and a dried ratatouille mix (eggplant, zucchini and tomatoes). He serves it with a yogurt sauce made with garlic, fresh basil, olive oil and the chicken broth in which the ravioli was cooked.

Any promotions featuring Middle Eastern food would do well to mention how healthy it is. Legumes and grains, such as rice and couscous, play an important part in the Middle Eastern diet, and Arabs eat only half the meat Americans do. The fats used are from olive oil and other vegetable oils, not animal fats. Yogurt, which every family makes in its own way, is used for dips, soups, salad dressings and marinades. The most easily digestible of all dairy products, it is thought to ensure longevity and health. And although they might spend all day drinking cup after cup of the strong-tasting coffee, the way in which it is made—boiling it repeatedly—eliminates much of the caffeine. ❑

by Joan E. Herlong

IMPORTS
As Important As Ever

The downturn in the dollar's value does not seem to threaten the growing use of imports, especially among fancy or gourmet items. As long as chefs are willing to "go to the ends of the earth" for the best quality, there will be a steady flow of imported fare into America's restaurants.



Max Karl Winkler

Piero Selvaggio is very particular about what goes into the Italian dishes created at his two restaurants, Valentino's in Santa Monica, California, and Primi in Los Angeles. So particular that he is reputed to insist on using only imported ingredients. "Not true," says Selvaggio. "I only import the *important* ingredients." He then lists virtually every element of Italian cuisine as being important, from *borlotti* to *bresaola*. Despite his long list, imports make up "maybe 25 percent" of his entire purchases, but Selvaggio cautions against using such "misleading" figures when discussing restaurants' use of imports. It's not the number that's important, it's the quality.

Quality and authenticity. Quality and authenticity are the main reasons restaurateurs use imports. Edward Marrocco of Marrocco's "Autentico Ristorante Italiano" in Washington, DC, maintains that "some things you just have to import. I wouldn't be caught dead using domestic cheeses, and I use only *Di Cecco* products. They make the best pasta in Italy."

The choice of imports is often a matter of ethnic pride. Although it's quite common for fine Italian restaurants to use pasta, tomatoes and cheeses from Italy, for example, Greek restaurants often use the same imported ingredients—from Greece. George Markos, owner of the Akropol restaurant in Falls Church, Virginia, says such preferences are mostly due to customer expectations. Says Markos, "The California olives are really very good; but when people come to a Greek restaurant, they expect Greek olives, and *Kalamata* olives are the best in the world. I wouldn't be willing to change even for price reasons because people who know Greek food will suspect your consistency."

Roger Fessaguet, a partner at La Caravelle restaurant in New York City and editor of *Toques Blanches*, the magazine for French-speaking chefs in North America, says he prefers to use French goods, "as much as I can afford," because of quality and what he calls "securité." Fessaguet explains, "Chefs like to have their own products around them, what they were trained with, what they are used to. Besides, why call it a French restaurant if you don't use French ingredients? I don't think of it as just a meal but as an *education gastronomique*."

Availability. Another reason for using imported foods is availability. Seafood, for example, is almost synonymous with imports because of U.S. fishing regulations and seasonal fluctuations in supply. According to Roger Corey, trade analyst with the U.S. International Trade Commission, 65 percent of all the fish consumed by Americans in 1986 was imported. For shrimp, the import figure jumps to 80 percent. Corey explains that the

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Another perspective—buying American

Many American chefs and restaurateurs question the need for importing foods. For chef Larry Forgione of An American Place in New York City, the use of domestic products in his kitchen is not just a philosophy but an official policy. "I only use domestic ingredients," explains Forgione, "but I use American foods from a purely positive point of view—not to downplay anything else." Forgione creates his dishes based on American food history, but adds there are "no boundaries" to his fare.

Freshness—top reason

Top on the list of reasons for using only "home-grown" products comes freshness. George Tate, head chef at the Heathman Hotel in Portland, Oregon, like Forgione, says relying only on the best fresh products available simply makes the most sense. "We feature things at their *peak*," says Tate, "because at their peak, foods taste best and are the least expensive. I can't understand why anyone would want to do anything differently." Tate's menu features Oregon cuisine with a seasonal flair. Tate points to salmon as a good example of his "fresh approach" to ingredients. "The salmon are running now; and to get the best salmon we can, we have worked out an agreement so the fish are caught especially for our restaurant and handled and prepared right on the boat. It costs a little extra per pound, but it's well worth it."

At Campton Place in San Francisco, chef Bradley Ogden also depends on fresh American ingredients for the 400 meals his kitchen creates each day. Ogden says he has no problem matching the quality of imported foods, including cheeses, because "American products continue to get better all the time. I guess it all depends on what area you're in. Maybe there are some places in the United States where you can't find good fresh products all the time. But our produce in California is fantastic." Ogden maintains that even ethnic restaurants could use only domestic ingredients and still achieve excellent quality. "Importing seems to be a case of what you're used to, or of authenticity," Ogden supposes. "But the quality here is just the same."

Preparing dishes using only fresh, usually locally produced, foods is a satisfying and successful approach for these chefs, but they are hardly trying to nudge any importers out of business. Chef Larry Forgione aptly sums up the outlook of these "American-only" chefs when he says, "I don't use U.S. products to make a 'better than' statement. I use them because I want to highlight the bounty of what America has to offer in its foods—the richness and the unique quality."

fish situation is "a simple case of availability. There is only so much fish in the ocean. The demand for seafood in the United States is going up, but the supply is static."

Marcel Lahsene is head chef at Jake's Famous Crawfish in Portland, Oregon, serving 300 to 400 dinners nightly. Lahsene observes that, "The fish market is more subject to supply and demand than it is to fluctuations in the dollar. There are *daily* fluctuations." Lahsene explains that the amount of seafood he imports depends on quality, availability and weather conditions. "We have a good indigenous market for salmon, crab, sole, razor clams and various bottom fish; but if the weather is too rough to catch it locally, you've got to get it somewhere else. We have to import because we hang our hat on fresh seafood." A lot of the fish served at Jake's and other fresh-seafood restaurants comes from Mexico and Taiwan. With seasons running opposite to those in the United States, Chile and New Zealand are popular suppliers of fresh seafood during the winter months.

The frozen-fish market, dominated by large chains such as McDonald's and Long John Silver's, is also heavily dependent on imports. According to Corey at the U.S. International Trade Commission, the chain restaurants import their fish mostly, though not exclusively, from Scandinavian countries, such as Norway and Iceland.

Jim Salmon, vice president for purchasing at General Mills Restaurants, says Red Lobster must import most of its fish in order to meet its huge demand. Red Lobster buys its fish from about 23 nations, including the United States. Salmon explains that General Mills has "no set contracts at all. We negotiate for pounds on a yearly basis. Price is generally set by volume and the market itself. But price is always secondary to quality and supply."

For some ethnic restaurants featuring seafood, imports are as much a consequence of taste and custom as they are of supply. Philip Chiang, owner and general manager of the Mandarin, a Peking-style Chinese establishment in Beverly Hills, California, says his restaurant serves mostly Chinese and Taiwanese seafood because "American fishermen don't fish what we eat. To name a few—carp, jellyfish and sea slugs—are certainly available in American waters, but they are not familiar to the American palate. American fishermen catch what sells."

Price. One of the myths about imports is that imported automatically means more expensive, yet for many processed foods, imports can actually be cheaper than domestic versions of the same quality.

Because of lower labor costs abroad, products requiring labor-intensive preparation are especially good buys overseas. Chiang of The Mandarin points to water chestnuts as an example: "It requires a lot of labor to prepare water chestnuts. Water chestnuts grown and prepared in the traditional way in China are much cheaper than those we could get fresh in the United States and prepare ourselves. And China grows much more of them."

But not everything is cheaper abroad. Imports can get pricey when the dollar fluctuates and when there are changes in supply and demand. Ron Tanner, communications director for the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade, notes that "Changes in import food prices usually trail changes in the dollar by about six months." With the dollar's currently weak position vis a vis the European and Japanese markets, restaurateurs are beginning to feel the pinch. According to chef Fessaguet, "Prices on certain items, such as truffles, are getting out of range. About two months ago truffles went up to $220 for eight pounds. I don't think my customers want to pay that much for truffles."

As dips in the dollar push up prices for imports, restaurateurs must keep a balance between maintaining profits and customers. Edward Marrocco concedes that "Devaluation of the dollar has definitely hurt me. I guess that will eventually have to translate to slightly higher prices on the menu."

New markets. The depreciation of the dollar can create new markets for imported goods. Canada, for example, has been able to lure some American buyers because its national currency closely follows the U.S. dollar. Patrick LeNouvel, project manager for Canada's U.S. Bureau of External Affairs, relates that in the present currency market, "Canada has the initial advantage of price, and then we hope to retain new business by matching or exceeding others' quality. For example, a buyer priced out of the Norwegian salmon market can easily turn to Canada for our Atlantic salmon, which is equally good—plus our three *other* varieties of Pacific salmon, which Norway cannot provide."

No boundaries in the world of food

Of course, it would be misleading to suggest that choosy chefs choose only imported ingredients. Didier Durand, head chef at La Bohème in Winnetka, Illinois, creates classic French and "nouvelle" cuisine that he considers authentic regardless of where the ingredients come from. "I was trained in France," says Durand, "but I was not trained to insist on French products—only on quality. If I can find the same quality here, of course I will use it. It's not the ingredients that produce a French dish but the preparation."

Genie Luis, manager of Tilas, an "eclectic Latin American" restaurant in Houston, Texas, couldn't agree more. Lutz says that most of the spices used at Tilas are imported, but adds, "I don't think you can tell the difference between a fresh tomato grown in Houston or Matamoros." Although Tilas does not use many imported ingredients, Luis describes the fare as "authentic because of the preparation. The majority of our chefs are actually from, or trained in, Latin American countries. You don't get much more 'authentic' than that."

Even Piero Selvaggio warns against the use of imports as a proper gauge of a restaurant's quality or authenticity. Selvaggio places at least as much emphasis on his chefs and their "feel" for Italian cuisine as he does on the ingredients used. Selvaggio advises, "There are no boundaries in the world of food. There are certain things that are just not produced in Italy, but that doesn't mean Italians don't use them. Restaurants in Italy, after all, don't use *only* Italian foods." ❑

The Chinese were looking for importers, and brought some of their popular products—such as shrimp and frozen dim sum— to persuade candidates.

All it takes to convince the disbelievers, maintains Vivian Geitz, sales manager of Evian, is a sample.

Dollar's downturn does not affect international exhibits

The devaluation of the dollar has put some dent in the import market, according to international exhibitors at the Show, but they came in larger numbers than ever before. China had a booth for the first time, and exhibitor Kung Hsun Wei reported he was looking for importers for such popular products as shrimp, tea and prepared frozen foods, especially Chinese-style dim sum. Wei was confident that he would be successful at the Show.

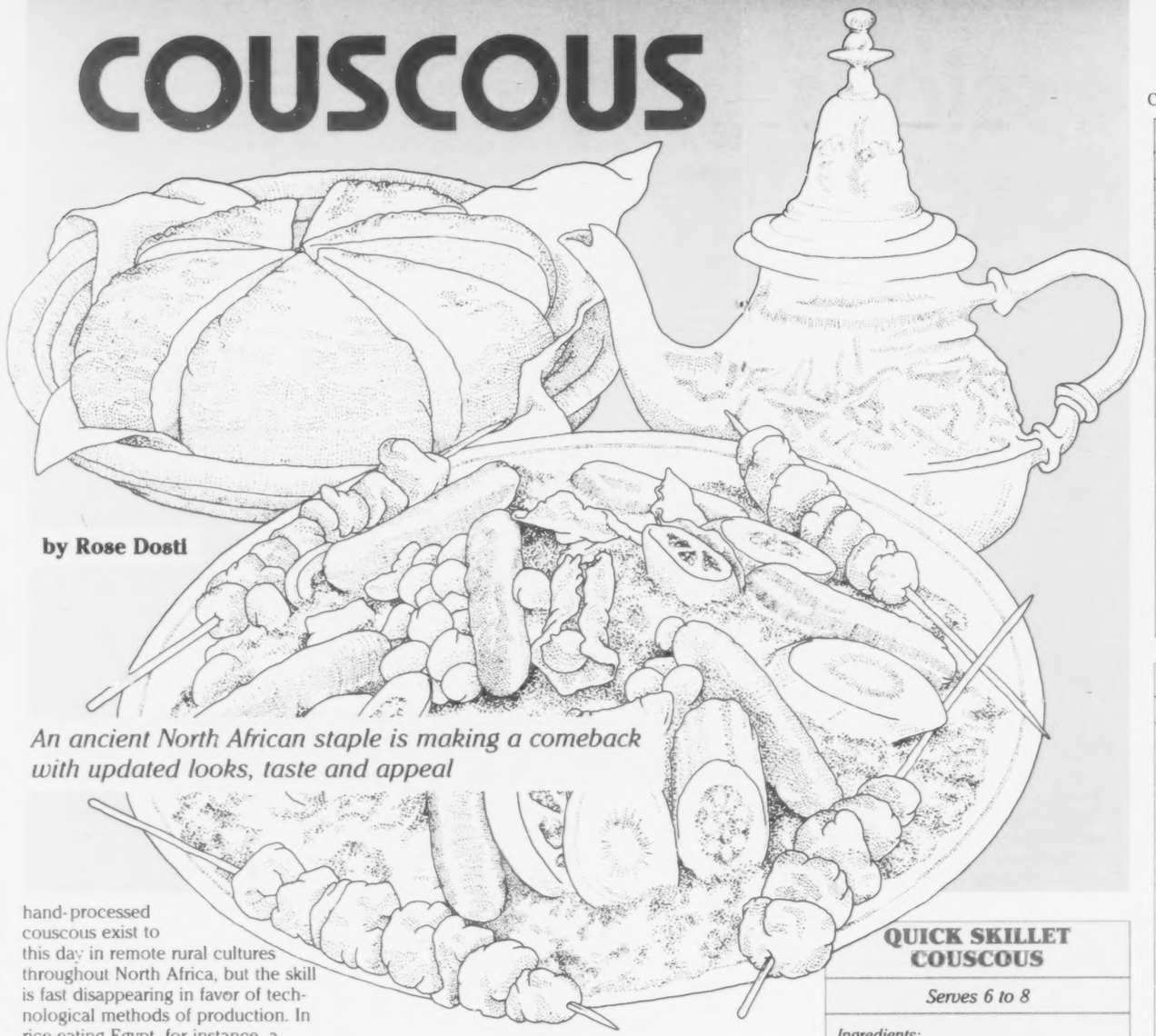
The German Wine Information Bureau was also optimistic, although some of its members cited a study by the National Association of Beverage Imports, which indicated sales of foreign wines were down 24 percent as a result of the weakening dollar. Nonetheless, even the Germans were introducing new products, such as Sichel Novum, a very dry wine by Peter S. Sichel of Blue Nun fame, and a riesling by the Rietburg Cooperative.

The fate of other products was more difficult to pin down. According to Philippe Pascal, president of Foods and Wine from France, "The value of the dollar is an obstacle to new companies that are trying to enter the market, but not for established companies." The exhibitors in the French Pavilion, such as Evian Water, Valhona Chocolate and Patis France, are all part of a distributor-and-importer network and represent some of France's most popular products.

To increase interest in the pavilion, Foods and Wine from France ran hour-long seminars on topics related to the exhibited products, such as a session on beaujolais and macon wine by Georges Deboeuf. "They are in line with our strategy of education," said Pascal, who believes that even a small group of interested people made this approach worthwhile.

On-site preparation was a drawing card at New Zealand's booth where several grills were kept sizzling throughout the Show with fresh New Zealand seafood, such as green-shell mussels and orange roughy, as well as farm-raised venison and spring lamb.

COUSCOUS



An ancient North African staple is making a comeback with updated looks, taste and appeal

by Rose Dosti

The word *couscous* conjures visions of Bedouins racing across the desert against a blazing sun or a smoky Parisian cafe in the backwaters of the Latin Quarter where couscous is as well known as *pommes frites*.

Well, forget all that. Couscous is undergoing an image makeover. It's making a comeback with updated looks, taste and appeal, thanks to the imaginative chefs of some of the top restaurants in the country.

The basic structure of the couscous dish is still intact: couscous as a substitute for rice is served as a bed for stews, kebabs, meatballs and assorted vegetables, or as a side dish, much like rice. But the presentation and styling differ dramatically, depending on the skill and artistry of the chef.

At Citrus, one of the hottest eateries in Los Angeles, chef Michel Richard serves a couscous so unique, no North African couscous-eater would recognize his or her favorite grain, even though all the basic couscous ingredients are used. Richard serves turbans of couscous covered with paper-thin slices of lamb and topped with ultrarefined ratatouille, containing the traditional vegetables of the couscous meal.

Joachim Splichal (Regency Club, Los Angeles) makes Chicken and Cilantro Couscous—a dish so low in calories (because it is made without fat) that it was recently introduced on the special gourmet diet menu at Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital. These are but two examples of a growing trend.

Couscous is one of the first pasta products derived from wheat (probably predating Marco Polo's spaghetti contribution by several millenia). In the hands of the nomadic Berbers, the aboriginal people of North Africa, semolina from hard durum wheat was processed into a dough, which was then rolled between the palms of hands into tiny nuggets or crumbs. When cooked, the crumbs expand, as does any pasta or rice. The combination of couscous with vegetables and often meat created a completely balanced and nutritious diet. Recipes for hand-processed couscous exist to this day in remote rural cultures throughout North Africa, but the skill is fast disappearing in favor of technological methods of production. In rice-eating Egypt, for instance, a couscous dish known as *el sebour'* is used as part of a ritual for weddings, circumcisions and baptisms. However, in other parts of North Africa, such as Morocco, Tunis and Algeria, there is no major event, banquet or family meal without a dish of couscous.

You can adapt couscous to any recipe using rice or pasta. You can add any vegetables to the couscous, or top it with any vegetables or meat stew, goulash, curry or any sauce, including Italian, Cajun-style, Thai or Japanese (teriyaki) sauces. You can also add couscous to soups.

Couscous can be steamed, braised or microwaved. Some cooks prefer soaking the grains in water until the liquid is absorbed before cooking, to expand and soften them.

Many North African cooks rub olive oil or another vegetable oil into the soaked grains between the palms of hands to aid the separation of the grains. But that is a matter of personal preference as well. You can serve the couscous plain, or with butter or hot oil added for extra flavor and moistness. Juices from meats, vegetables or sauces also are added, according to taste. ❑

Rose Dosti is a staff writer for the Los Angeles Times

QUICK SKILLET COUSCOUS

Serves 6 to 8

Ingredients:
1 lb. couscous
2 Tbs. olive oil
2 cups hot broth or hot water
Salt
Dash cumin
Dash paprika
1 Tbs. butter

Method:
Brown couscous in oil. Add hot broth and let stand until liquid is absorbed. Couscous will expand. Add salt, cumin, paprika and butter. Stir and mound on serving dish. Place in 350 degree oven 5 minutes to dry slightly. Before serving separate grains with fork.

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CHICKEN COUSCOUS JOACHIM SPLICHAL

Serves 4

Ingredients:
1 (2-to-3-pound) chicken, cut up and skinned
3 cups defatted chicken stock
1 carrot, peeled
½ stalk celery, peeled
1 small onion, chopped
1 leek, well rinsed
1 turnip, peeled
1 lemon, halved
1½ bunch cilantro, chopped
1 red onion
1½ cups couscous
Cold tomato sauce (see recipe)

Method:
Place chicken in steamer basket. Put chicken stock, carrot, celery, onion, leek, turnip and lemon halves in bottom of steamer and bring to boil. Steam chicken until tender, about 35 to 40 minutes. Remove chicken and cool.

Meanwhile, bring chicken broth to reboil in steamer pot. Add cilantro and red onion. Place couscous in rinsed steamer basket and cook couscous until done, according to package directions.

Skin and bone chicken. Slice meat. Slice carrot, celery, onion, leek and turnip. Discard lemon. Arrange chicken and vegetables over couscous. Serve with cold tomato sauce.

COLD TOMATO SAUCE

Ingredients:
8 plum tomatoes
1 bunch cilantro, chopped
1 (8-ounce) can tomato juice
1 bunch green onions, finely julienned

Method:
Dice tomatoes and combine with cilantro. Add tomato juice and green onions. Serve with couscous.

MICHEL RICHARD'S COUSCOUS WITH LAMB

Serves 4

Ingredients:
1 (1-lb.) loin of lamb
Salt, pepper
1 clove garlic, split
1 cup chicken broth
1 cup couscous
1 Tbs. olive oil
Ratatouille (see recipe)

Method:
Rub lamb loin with salt and pepper to taste, and split side of garlic cloves. Place in baking pan and roast at 400 degrees 20 to 30 minutes or until meat thermometer reaches 140 to 150 degrees, depending on rareness desired. Do not overcook.

Bring chicken broth to boil, with salt and pepper to taste. Add couscous. Stir and remove from heat. Stir in oil and let stand 10 minutes.

To serve, slice lamb thinly. Using 4-inch Charlotte mold or clean, empty ring fashioned from 12-ounce (2-inch-deep) sterilized tuna can, with label, lid and bottom removed, overlap slices in bottom and sides of mold or ring. Pack couscous over lamb almost to rim. Top evenly wtih some ratatouille. Invert molds on serving plate and top with more ratatouille and juices from lamb and ratatouille. Serve at once.

RATATOUILLE

Ingredients:
1 Japanese eggplant
1 tomato
1 zucchini
1 Tbs. olive oil
½ yellow pepper, diced
½ sweet red pepper, diced
½ green pepper, diced
½ cured lemon or zest from 1 lemon
½ red onion, diced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbs. minced fresh basil
1 tspn. cumin; salt and pepper

Method:
Cut eggplant in half. Scoop out seeds and discard, leaving only ½-inch shell with skin intact. Cut shells into tiny dice. Cut tomato in half, scoop out seeds and discard, then dice. Repeat for zucchini.

Heat oil in large skillet. Add eggplant, tomato, zucchini, peppers, lemon peel, onion, garlic, basil and cumin. Saute until vegetables are barely cooked. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Place in freezer tray to cool in freezer, to stop further cooking and to preserve color. At last minute, reheat and assemble with couscous as directed in recipe. Makes about 4 cups.

Two Sessions of Show and Tell

The 18th annual National Restaurant Association Culinary Arts Salon showcased the works of some of America's finest chefs in its first-ever double salon. A panel of 10 judges—all National Culinary Team members—selected winners from the first session, which was held on Saturday and Sunday, May 21 and 22, and then had to repeat the difficult selection process in the second salon, held on Monday and Tuesday, May 23 and 24.

Show attendees were dazzled by as many as 200 entries—easily doubling last year's number. Expanding the salon to two separate sessions increased the available table space to 9,000 square feet, allowing all interested applicants to participate in this prestigious national competition. Participants were able to choose the session of their choice. According to Al Natker, who coordinates the annual event from the National Restaurant Association Chicago office, this decision is dictated by the participants' demanding schedules. "It's difficult for chefs to get five days off to enter this competition—many have to drive cross-country with the food in their car and the air conditioners blasting," Natker explains.

The Culinary Arts Salon promises to be even more exciting in years to come. According to Natker, "At this year's Show, I had requests from people from France, Mexico, the West Indies—all over—for information on how to participate next year."

Show attendees scrutinize the beautiful displays in the Culinary Arts Salons to take ideas back to their own kitchens.

First salon highlights

Lawrence McFadden of the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, captured the award for Best Piece of the Show in the first

Drilling for gold

When Sergeant First Class David H. Ramos, born in Quito, Ecuador, came to America at age 20, he worked for a year in French restaurants in Washington, DC. Then he joined the U.S. Army and selected foodservice as his career. That decision has taken him to Korea, Germany, Switzerland and Spain. "I was very fortunate to learn about the foods in the countries where I worked," says Ramos, now a Certified Executive Chef (C.E.C.).

His gold-winning entry at the Springboard to Frankfurt display included an English-style cake and two centerpieces, one a pastillage miniature of a princess, complete with a castle relief inside the egg. Ramos believes that this piece was particularly impressive because of its exacting detail and size. Ramos, who draws everything before he executes it, says it took him 10 days to complete the pastillage miniature. His entry also included eight types of petits fours and a selection of classical cold sweets.

With the Chicago Show behind him, Ramos feels more confident to lead the Army team at the "Culinary Olympics" in Frankfurt, Germany.

Ramos' teammate, Warrant Officer Eric Morgan of the Army Catering Corps of the British Army, is a bit of a rarity for a chef of his experience. "I had never entered competitions before I came here," says the Wales-born Morgan, who is with the Army's cooks' school on the two-year exchange program until fall 1989. His winning piece

It took Sergeant David Ramos 10 days to complete his pastillage display that won him a gold medal in the Springboard to Frankfurt competition.

session of the Culinary Arts Salon. His display included smoked tuna steak, salmon steak and "Wild Turkey Allegheny" plus a wild turkey out of salt dough, colored red, green and white.

Alain Robey of the Hyatt Regency, Chicago, received the Judges' Special Award for Pastry for "Fantasy on Water," an elaborate Show-stopper depicting two swans pulling a boat. This piece required 90 pounds of sugar for its construction. "The idea of the swans pulling the boat is for my wife," Robey explains. "Since I am relocating from New York, I have been separated from my wife until she can move; so the swans pulling the boat with the inscription on the cake, 'I love you, Esther,' is my way of carrying her here."

A Judges' Special Award also went to Alex Darvishi of The Athletic Club of Columbus, Ohio, for his team's display of eight individual plates and two restaurant platters, including duck, seafood, beef tenderloin, lamb, guinea hen, quail and "Buddhist Paradise," a vegetarian dish.

Chef Leo Waldmeier of the Drake Hotel in Chicago claimed the award for Most Original Piece of the Show for his display of 10 soups from around the world. The entry included a placard with a description that read: "From the new eating trends—back to Grandmother's cooking, when a

of Chinese temples in pastillage included an entire scene with pagoda, bridge, Chinese pond and tea pavilion.

As a preliminary to Chicago, in March of this year Morgan entered a culinary show in Charlotte, North Carolina, and won a gold medal. "I began preparing for Chicago after Easter. I went to the library and got out books on Chinese architecture. It took me three days just to build a paper model to scale," explains Morgan. Then it took three weeks to build the display, which had to be transported 900 miles to Chicago. "We packed it in boxes of styrofoam and hoped for the best," notes Morgan. Driving at 45 miles an hour, it took two days to get to Chicago. "The last 12 miles took two hours, and we put signs on the side of the van indicating that we were the 'U.S. Army Culinary Arts Team' so other motorists would not get upset."

Sample timetable for culinary competition

Note: Entrants must comply with deadlines regarding entry and other dates and with all other competition requirements.

Part A: Six months before competition

1. Decide on category for entry.
2. Prepare money and time budgets.
3. Write/revise/select recipes.
4. Write ingredient specifications for primary ingredients.
5. Write purchase orders and select suppliers for primary ingredients.
6. Begin preparation of salt, sugar, chocolate or other sculptures.
7. Select display items, dinner plates, etc.

Part B: Three months before competition

1. Conduct first tests and self-judge your entry; get ideas from experienced chefs or your instructors.
2. Develop and revise detailed equipment, supply and ingredient lists.
3. Develop detailed time schedule required for preparation.
4. Design alternative display arrangements; decide on display to be used.

Part C: One month before competition

1. Prepare any bread sculptures or gum-paste containers.
2. Finish any salt, sugar or chocolate sculptures.

Part D: One week before competition

1. Prepare a detailed schedule.
2. Prepare all pates, terrines, gallantines; store them wrapped or covered in airtight containers.
3. Make description cards or signs.

Part E: Three days before competition

1. Check everything prepared to this point; ensure that all items are acceptable.
2. Begin preparation of carved vegetable containers.
3. Poach any poultry, fish or other items.
4. Prepare any rice or other timbales and related items that you will need.
5. Prepare aspic.
6. Prepare all sauces for hot food displayed cold.

Part F: Two days before competition

1. Recheck every item prepared to this point.
2. Cook any yellow vegetables.
3. Arrange containers for transportation to the competition site.
4. Pack cleaning sprays for mirrors, along with towels and all other cleaning and related supplies.

Part G: One day before competition

1. Cook all remaining meat, poultry, game and fish.
2. Cut and blanch all remaining garnishes; cook and store them in damp covered containers.
3. Cook all remaining items, such as fruit.
4. Assemble styrofoam slabs, toothpicks, spatulas, paring knives and other equipment you will use.
5. Assemble all platters and mirrors; polish if needed.
6. Bake any perishable goods; assemble pastries and cakes.

Part H: The night before competition (5 p.m.)

1. Prepare bain-maries for warming aspic and sauces.
2. Place aspic and sauces in bain-marie and melt.
3. Slice all required items (such as meats, game, poultry, fish, pates, terrines and gallantines); line them up on racks in the layout that will be used for the display so that items can be glazed.
4. Unwrap and dry all vegetables and garnishes.
5. Finish icing all pastries and cakes.
6. Apply aspic to all items needing glaze (apply three coats).
7. Remove aspic drips, bubbles and icicles; reglaze if necessary.
8. Start assembly of platter displays that will be transported assembled.
9. Pack items that you will assemble on location.
10. Clean up and turn off equipment.
11. Load car or truck. Ensure that all required items are loaded; drive to competition site.
12. Unload and assemble your display; ensure that you count every slice and garnish twice.
13. Return all unneeded containers to your truck or car.
14. Return with camera; ensure that everything looks perfect and take pictures.
15. Eat and relax.
16. Return to competition site for results and request that judges critique your entries and provide suggestions for improvements.

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good soup was a meal by itself." (See menu.)

An exceptionally bright spot in the student-entry category was the culinary team from the National Center for Hospitality Studies at Sullivan Junior College of Business in Louisville, Kentucky. The seven-member team won five medals—three golds and two silvers. This is particularly notable because the center has only been open for nine months. Gold medal winners were Robert Straw, Candice Bates and Dorothy Smith.

Arnold Tokarz from The Athletic Club of Columbus was judged the top Junior Culinarian for a display that reflected the back-to-basics theme with "pork and beans" and a turkey platter. Tokarz says he got the idea for the display when he accompanied his boss Alex Darvishi—also a winner—to the Show last year.

Second salon highlights

The Lodge of the Four Seasons in Lake Ozark, Missouri, received the award for Best of the Show in the Grand Buffet category in the second session of the Culinary Arts Salon. This team also captured a Judges' Special Award for its model of the U.S.S. Constitution, "Old Ironsides." The ship, created with gum paste, was intricately detailed—including patches stitched into the sails. "We bought a model of the ship, studied it and built our ship like one would build a real ship. In fact, if you looked inside the back of the ship, into the living quarters, you would see a bed and pillow, maps and dining table," says team captain Andre Torres.

The award for Most Original Piece of the Show went to Gunter Lorscheidt of the Four Seasons Inn on the Park, of Toronto, for his two restaurant platters for four.

James Hanyzeski, chef of the 1913 Room at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, Michigan, was awarded the Best Piece of the Show for his display featuring "Lamb Bouillon Potato-Filled Dumpling" and "Jordan Valley Brook Trout with Asparagus Puree."

A Judges' Special Award for Pastry went to Cynthia Coston, also of the Amway Grand Plaza, for her elaborate creation which combined a box made of chocolate with beribboned lid, filled with delicate chocolate confections, and set against a chocolate trellis with trailing roses, an assortment of petits fours, a pulled sugar centerpiece and a wedding cake decorated in peach, pink and purple wildflowers and pulled sugar.

The best entry from a junior culinarian was created by Patty Sinkeldam of Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina, who impressed the judges with her decorative centerpiece featuring the California Raisins.

Springboard to Frankfurt

Franz Poepperl of the Western Culinary Institute of Portland, Oregon, was awarded a blue ribbon for his "all rabbit" array of entrees and plates—11 dishes in all.

The Judges' Special Award went to David Ramos of the U.S. Army and Roland Henin of the Western Regional Team. (See sidebar.)

The Western Regional Team was first in the standings, followed by the U.S. Army and Walt Disney World. ❑

A menu of soups

Italy
Rabbit Consomme, Pistachio Ravioli and Vegetable Spaghetti
France
Pot au Feu of Boiled Chicken and Beef Roulade with Spring Vegetables
Spain
Stuffed Squid with Crayfish Tails in Mussel Broth
China
Double Boiled Duck Web Soup with Chinese Mushrooms
Germany
Lentil Soup with Smoked Quail and Baby Leek
Belgium
Cold Zucchini Soup with Bay Scallops and Caviar
Austria
Venison Consomme with Stuffed Morels and Semolina Dumpling
Peru
Chilled Tomato Soup with Eish and Seafood Seviche
Ireland
Lamb Consomme with Boiled Tongue and Cabbage Roll
America
Wild Rice Chowder with Maine Lobster and Corn

LEARNING FROM THE MASTERS

Chefs Stage

David Jarvis, chef/owner of Melange in Wilmette, Illinois, measures out ingredients for a peanut sauce that he will toss with scallions, watercress, bean sprouts and stir-fried bay scallops.

Johnny Rivers, executive chef at Walt Disney World's Contemporary Resort Hotel, displays his "Chicken Saint Cloud"—a healthy dish made with stuffed chicken breast that is rolled and then poached.

Howard Helmer, omelette-maker extraordinaire, asks the audience, "What can go in an omelette?" Their trained response: "Anything!"

Martin Yan, star of public television's "Yan Can Cook," entertained the audience with his engaging personality and blindingly fast cleaver.

In front of a packed house, Mark Erickson prepares "Stuffed Cornish Game Hen, Minnesota Woodsman-Style," as his colleague at the Culinary Institute of America, Tim Ryan, prepares his next verbal dart for the friendly banter between them.

Pierre Pollin of Le Titi de Paris in Arlington Heights, Illinois, prepared a simple, but award-winning, dish of layered eggplant, tomato sauce, zucchini and shrimp.

One of the highlights of this year's Show was the inaugural Chefs Stage, a series of cooking demonstrations by some of the nation's top chefs. As the chefs whipped up their award-winning signature dishes, the audience furiously scribbled down notes and marveled at the demonstrators' knack for making the difficult look easy. Although each new dish had mouths watering, attendees seemed to agree that the techniques and information passed on by the chefs were of even more value than the individual recipes. Here are some of the tips:

1. Salmon makes an excellent puree because it has a lot of oil in the flesh. (Noel Cullen)
2. Make crepes in a large sheetpan in the oven—it's quicker and easier, than in a pan and you can cut them into any shape you want. (Tim Ryan)
3. "Today, sauces are served under the food rather than over." (Cullen)
4. "I like to serve scallion brushes as a garnish because they can also be dipped in the sauce and eaten." (Cullen)
5. When you use a stainless steel whisk with an aluminum pan, make minimal contact, because your sauces will turn grey. (David Jarvis)
6. When measuring liquid ingredients in a measuring cup, use the most expensive ingredients first so you can wash out every last drop with the other ingredients. (Jarvis)
7. "I like to use cider instead of wine because it gives sauces a distinctive flavor." (Pierre Pollin)
8. Never add milk to omelettes. Add two tablespoons of water for every two eggs. The water steams, creating a lighter, fluffy omelette. (Howard Helmer)
9. The "Chinese boning knife' (a number 3 cleaver) can be used for almost anything a Chinese chef needs to do. (Martin Yan)
10. When you are combining disparate ingredients (such as in Chicken Saint Cloud, which is chicken stuffed with salmon), always balance the seasonings so no one flavor overpowers another. (Johnny Rivers)
11. "The best recipes consider economy as well as unique combinations and interesting presentation." (Ryan)

❑

by Kathy Boyle

Dessert Trays

Serving Up Sweet Profits

Who can resist a chocolate fudge cake or a fresh bowl of strawberries when they can smell the delicious aroma and see their voluptuous sweetness? Not many, say operators who find that bringing dessert trays to the table makes it easy to say yes to after-dinner treats.

"You learn something every day," says Bill Gillespie, co-owner of the 225-seat The Shore Bird in Princeton-by-the-Sea, California. "About two years ago I invited a group of tour agency heads to my restaurant to set up some bus tours to our area. After dinner, I offered everyone a dessert. When they began to say 'no,' I said, 'You have to see our desserts.' I asked a waitress to bring out a tray of some of the desserts so they could look at what we have. I was impressed when I saw the items on the tray. So was everyone else, and, of course, they all had a dessert. It raised the question, 'Why haven't we done this before?' Since that time, dessert trays have become a mainstay, and dessert sales have gone up at least 20 percent."

The increase is even more remarkable at Phillips Seafood Restaurants, Inc., a group of seven restaurants in Ocean City, Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland; Washington, DC; and Norfolk, Virginia. "Since we started serving our desserts on dessert trays a year ago, dessert sales increased 50 percent," says Lloyd Byrd, corporate director of purchasing.

"We were never real pushers of appetizers and desserts because we run a rather large, high-volume operation in the summer at the ocean resort," Byrd explains. "However, in the winter we try to upgrade. At our Phillips-by-the-Sea operation, we do some tableside cooking and tried dessert carts. It was a nice touch. How can you resist Grand Marnier cake staring you in the face?"

Following the wintertime success, Phillips decided to give desserts a test in its summer operations. But because of limited space, the restaurant decided to use trays instead of carts. "To tell the truth," Byrd adds, "we did not push it much at first. With 225 servers, we left it up to the staff: 'Take the dessert tray if you want to,' we said." The servers did, and profits soared.

Make it look irresistible

The switch to dessert trays usually requires no revamping of the dessert menu. In fact, customers expect to see their old favorites and any additional seasonal offerings you might add. Even if the menu does not change, a great deal of thought should go into making a beautiful presentation. Operators are unanimous that the display is critical to the success of dessert trays. Depending on the type of restaurant, operators use either a silver or a stainless tray, decorated with cloth napkins or paper doilies. Some operators even use garnish, such as fresh flowers, to add to the tray's attractiveness. "I go for eye appeal wherever possible," says Marlene Colucci, owner of Boccaccio's (140 seats) in Westlake Village, California, and the Florian (200 seats) in Washington, DC. She likes to combine tall items, such as a tall chocolate mousse cake decorated in black and white, with shorter, colorful, fresh fruit tarts.

According to Reid L. Ashton, owner of the 252-seat Golden Mushroom Restaurant in Southfield, Michigan, "The best way to merchandise desserts is to show them. And they are certainly the easiest thing to show." A strong believer in visual merchandising, Ashton does not feature desserts on the main menu. Instead, after dinner, servers bring an after-dinner drink list and a dessert tray to the table. About 15 desserts—all made in-house by the pastry chef—are arranged on a silver tray.

"Not everyone is a chocoholic, so we include fresh fruits and cheeses for those who may want something lighter," notes Ashton, "as well as a choice of chocolate items, pastries, tortes and mousses (one in a handmade chocolate cup)."

Barbara Gordon, director of marketing for the Big "4" Restaurants in Phoenix (which operate Oscar Taylor Restaurants), agrees that variety is critical. Although the restaurants are well known for the chain's signature items, they feature other items—from chocolate to fresh fruit—including 10 cakes. In fact, the 110-seat Inn at Glen Echo in Glen Echo, Maryland, discontinued its dessert tray when it revamped its menu and found that only two of its desserts could be displayed on a tray. The others must be served cold or fresh from the oven.

Operators are divided about whether trays should be for display only or for the sale of items. At Big "4" Restaurants, Phoenix, Arizona, for example, the trays include only sample items. Other establishments, however, serve off the dessert tray, replacing items as they are sold.

Send out a trained staff

Knowledgeable servers who are enthusiastic about the desserts on the tray are another key element in dessert sales success. Interviewed operators were unanimous in their belief that servers must have firsthand knowledge of the product. "Servers tasted everything during their training, and as new desserts are introduced, they sample these items, too," says Gordon.

Scandia, a 285-seat restaurant in West Hollywood, California, and the Golden Mushroom routinely hold tastings for all employees. Employees not only taste every item, but also learn in detail the cooking methods and ingredients used, so servers can discuss the selections with customers. At the Golden Mushroom these tastings and updates follow the intensive training period for servers when they are hired. Servers even take a test at the end of their training to prove they understand all the items.

Ashton of the Golden Mushroom notes one of the keys to suggestive selling: "You never ask, 'Do you want dessert?' Instead, you ask, 'Do you want our apple flan?' " Gillespie of The Shore Bird also notes the value of carefully selected words when selling desserts. "The first word out of their mouths should be 'homemade,' " says Gillespie. And at Phillips Restaurant, "the main description we like to get across is 'fresh-baked,' " says Byrd. As an incentive to sell desserts, The Shore Bird gives a bottle of wine to the highest seller on each shift.

Take the long way around

Some operators have found that showmanship can play a role in merchandising dessert trays. "We always tell servers to take the long way around to their tables when they are bringing the tray of desserts," explains Gillespie. "It is amazing what happens—people see the desserts go by—lemon meringue tart, pumpkin mousse pie, pumpkin pie, New York-style cheesecake with blueberries, mud pie, strawberries on a bed of ice served with powered sugar—and they make their choices early."

The Florian also serves the trays in style, but with a slightly different presentation. "We carry about six desserts to the table, just like in France," says manager David Craig. The whole cakes or tarts are set on the table or held by the server. It can take several servers to get the cakes to the table and hold them while the diner makes a decision, which, of course, draws all the customers' attention to the desserts.

Other pluses

In addition to stimulating dessert sales, operators report a dessert tray has operational advantages. It increases menu flexibility, makes room for seasonal specials and occasional novelty items, and can be used to expand a small list of dessert items.

Many operators also maintain that dessert trays lead to increased sales of other dessert items that cannot easily be displayed on the tray. While holding the tray, servers explain hot and cold dessert items ready to be served from the kitchen. Denny Ferrari, assistant manager of the 120-seat Lark Creek Inn in Larkspur, California, is convinced that dessert trays have boosted sales of "tucked-away" items. "We serve a beer-batter banana fritter, which is deep fried and served piping hot. When the server explains this item with the other items sitting on the tray, diners are tempted to order it." The same is true for cold desserts, such as the Lark Creek Inn's chocolate log with pistachio sauce, poached pears with chocolate sauce, and Italian gelato, none of which are displayed on the tray. ❑

Kathy Boyle is a freelance writer in Rockville, Maryland, who writes frequently for ***Restaurants USA.***

Filling your tray at the Show

It would take a dessert tray of enormous proportions to accommodate the tremendous variety of desserts represented at this year's Show. There seemed to be a run on booths featuring handmade, decadently rich cakes and pies. Vendors were steadily slicing up samples of their specialties for eager taste-testers. If you were to assemble a dessert tray from the confections on the Show floor, here is what you might include.

□ **The Heath Bar Crunch Pie** from Sweet Street Desserts in Reading, Pennsylvania. Attendees were spreading the word that it had to be tasted to be believed. Or the company's new **Coco Loco Tropical Cake**—smothered in coconut, covered with waves of whipped cream, topped with fresh lime slices and featuring "a kick of tequila."

□ **Trianon Chocolate Truffle Cake**—a combination of bittersweet chocolate, liqueurs and a taste of apricot. According to Susan's Sweet Talk, a division of Love and Quiches Ltd. from Freeport, New York, this is the company's "richest, most elegant dessert." For non-chocolate-lovers the booth featured **Hazelnut Mocha Torte** and **Raspberry Walnut Cake.**

□ **Handmade strudel** (seven varieties) from SinBad Sweets of Clovis, California, or a selection from the company's new line of **cheese, fruit and nut tarts.**

□ **Tropical Lemon Cake** from Country Epicure of Elmsford, New York, a division of Vie de France Corporation, with layers of creamy lemon mousse, or their version of the old classic **Black Forest Cake,** which weighs more than three pounds and contains real sour cherries.

□ **Banana Split Cake** from Aphrodite Confections of Love of Huntington Beach, California—cut a slice and you have all the ingredients of America's favorite sundae! This booth was also offering samples of two other new cakes: **Chocolate Supreme Cake** with three flavors of mousse and a **Kahlua Mile-High Cake.**

And **cheesecakes,** cheesecakes, cheesecakes! It seems that America's love affair with cheesecake is far from over, judging from the number of dessert vendors pitching their special variations of the classic confection from **Praline Ripple** to **White Chocolate Macadamia.**

And for the centerpiece, a custom-designed apple perhaps? Mrs. Prindable, Inc., of Skokie, Illinois, creates extravagantly decorated apples for every occasion. The company starts with a one-and-a-half pound apple and creates more than 60 varieties of **hand-dipped apples** with ingredients that include a selection of three types of caramel, two types of chocolate, five kinds of nuts and a variety of other toppings to make each apple a unique taste—and visual—sensation. ❑

SHOW FLOOR

What's Hot and What's Not

What kind of times are these? Feverishly competitive if the Show floor is any indication. On every aisle there were ideas for faster, fresher, tastier, more efficient ways of serving food to customers. There were 14 different frozen yogurts alone—up from last year's nine, 25 percent more catering supply booths, and new ideas from an automatic handwashing machine to a countertop fish smoker. Here's a taste of the variety.

More than 102,000 attendees from all over the world came to look, learn and sample the 1,900 products and services exhibited at this year's Show.

A delivery car with a warming oven "riding shotgun" drew attention for its space-saving efficiency.

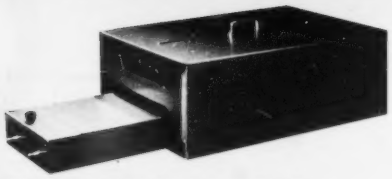
John Metz, chairman of the convention committee, picks the winner's name in the association membership drawing at the Show. Tom Muller from Chaut General Store, Ashville, New York, was the lucky winner of a complete POS system from TEC America. From left, John Canary, executive vice president of TEC America; Don Ethier, director, membership and direct marketing, National Restaurant Association; Metz; and Fred Shook, sales manager, hospitality, TEC America.

Calling all managers, investors, developers, partners and international franchisers. Heartthrob Enterprises was at the Show to get word out about its privately-owned nightclub/restaurant corporation—and to find some business leads. Were they successful? "Oh definitely."

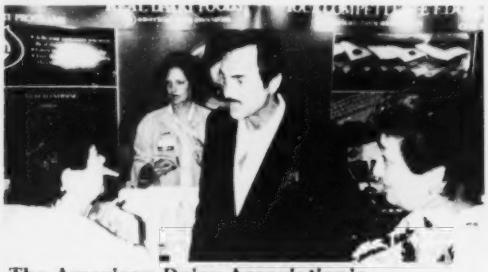
Time savers

- ☐ Ginger—peeled, chopped and ready to use.
- ☐ Hard-cooked, peeled eggs packaged in controlled-atmosphere packaging.
- ☐ Partially-cooked wild rice, microwaveable, too
- ☐ Spice mix for Caribbean "jerk" chicken
- ☐ Puree of ripe yellow tomatoes
- ☐ 15-second omelettes
- ☐ Frozen pasta from an Italian restaurant in Modena.

Mobile kitchens might find a niche in the fast-growing field of catering—especially when they're dressed up with awnings.



Quality control extraordinaire—a countertop smoker for salmon or other fish.



The American Dairy Association's booth featured Hollywood and game show celebrity look-alikes to emphasize the importance of distinquishing between "the real thing" and imitations—whether in people or dairy foods. Celebrity 'imitator' Burt Reynolds (Fred Leaf) asked Show attendees to recite a pledge to use real dairy foods. .

Nostalgia everywhere—not only in products, such as potato pancakes and blintzes, but also in the diner-era decor of booths. Here "The Greenwood Grill" is recreated down to the pin-up girl postcards on the cash register. The booth sold catfish.

Double takes

□ 3-D inflated, illuminated signs.

□ Silent paging system to let servers know their orders are ready.

□ "Splashies"—liquid-filled placements for children in interactive designs.

□ Tamper-proof coffee maker that can switch back and forth between caffeinated and decaffeinated brewing system.

□ A can opener that doubles as a handle.

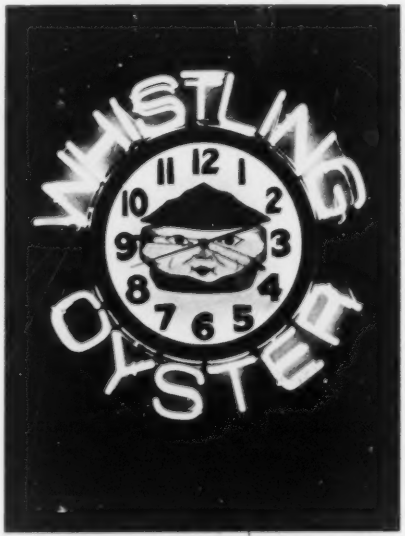
□ An automatic handwashing machine.

□ Fast-acting copper and silver polish new to the U.S. market (from Denmark).

□ Breakfast tacos

□ Sculptchair—a stretch fabric for dressing up folding or stacking chairs

□ Citronella torches with bug repelling scent.



Even the cover idea for this month's *Restaurants USA* came from the Show floor—at a booth of customized neon clocks.

Promotion power

□ **A rollpin plastic pizza cutter**—inexpensive enough to send one home with every customer, with one's logo and phone number, of course.

□ **Color-changing plastic straws, cups, etc.** that change color when exposed to heat or cold. A real show stopper—everyone wanted samples for his or her five children.

□ **Restaurant celebration kit,** introducing Polaroid's new system for photo mementos—buttons and special-event pictures.

□ **New packaging**—from "critter cartons"—meal cartons that can be converted into animals—to cartons for single pizza slices, tacos or burritos. For those favoring traditional styrofoam, there were new varieties with embossing.

□ Colorful jackets, umbrellas, bags and caps made of "ty-vek," the same material used to make Federal Express envelopes.

□ "Honey, I love you" promotion ideas from the Honey Board, which also featured plastic tubes filled with 1 teaspoon of clover honey—a tidier way to stir in some sweetness.

HATS OFF TO STUDENTS

Students—the future of the foodservice industry—received a special tribute at this year's Show. The Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association planned "Salute to Excellence" activities for 141 student honor delegates selected on the basis of academic performance, career interest and industry work experience and achievements.

This tribute featured a student forum—a fast-moving program of personal messages to students from eight foodservice industry leaders. "The student forum is a vital part of our continuing effort to attract highly motivated, qualified young people to careers in foodservice," says Michael Hurst, president of 15th Street Fisheries in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who chaired the event.

In all cases the industry leaders spoke of caring about people and about excellence of performance. "Each walk of life has its aristocracy," quoted Patrick O'Malley, one of the speakers, "and it's up to you to be a member of this group." O'Malley received this year's Ambassador of Hospitality Award.

Other student activities included a student idea exchange and banquet.

"Love people. Take care of them," urged Gordon D. Bell, chairman of Lincoln Foodservice Products in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

According to Carlyn Berghoff, president of Carlyn Berghoff Catering in Chicago, teamwork is the key to success. "Relinquish authority," she warned. "You'll die if you don't."

"If you can find a mentor, you've struck it big," said Richard Melman, president of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises in Chicago.

"An organization has to reward service," said Jim Peterson, president of the National Restaurant Association and Whataburger in Corpus Christi, Texas.

"Don't be afraid to take a risk," urged Daniel Gescheidle, executive committee chairman of ComSource Independent Foodservice Companies, Inc., in Chicago. "When you're not learning, when things aren't happening, move on."

"You need to paint a picture of what you want to get out of your career," Michael Grisanti, president of Grisanti, Inc., in Louisville, Kentucky, told the students. "The more you paint a picture of what you want, the more it will come back to roost," he said.

"Understand the basics," urged Walter Conti, chairman of Conti Cross Keys Inn in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. "It takes a hell of a lot of smarts to be the best dishwasher in Doylestown."

"We spend too much time thinking about technology and not enough time thinking about people," said Patrick O'Malley, chairman emeritus of Canteen Company in Chicago.

Peterson names new committee heads

As Chairman of the Board and President of the National Restaurant Association, Jim L. Peterson appointed new heads of committees and task forces to direct the activities of the National Restaurant Association. As the association's executive officer, Peterson himself heads the Executive Committee. The new chairmanships are as follows:

□ **Audit:** Guss Dussin (OSF International, Inc., Portland, OR)

□ **Bylaws:** Robert S. Wood (Bob Evans Farms, Inc., Columbus, OH)

□ **Communications:** Paul W. Lazar (Wharf Tavern, Inc., Warren, RI)

□ **Convention:** John C. Metz (Morrison's Custom Management, Kingston, PA)

□ **Finance:** Michael E. Hurst (15th Street Fisheries, Ft. Lauderdale, FL)

□ **Government Affairs:** Robert M. Rosenberg (Dunkin' Donuts, Inc., Randolph, MA)

□ **Industry Image/Human Resources:** Jackie B. Trujillo (Harman Management Corp., Los Altos, CA)

□ **Investment:** James H. Maynard (Golden Corral Corp., Raleigh, NC)

□ **Membership:** W.W. "Biff" Naylor (Naylor Bros. Restaurants, Los Angeles, CA)

□ **Nominating:** Stephen E. Elmont (Creative Gourmets, Ltd., Boston, MA)

□ **Pension and Employee Benefits:** John F. Cauley (Friendly Ice Cream Corp., Wilbraham, MA)

□ **Political Action:** Ralph O. Brennan (Mr. B's, Inc., New Orleans, LA)

□ **Political Education:** John R. Farquharson (ARA Services, Inc., Philadelphia, PA)

□ **Research:** Bernard H. Schreiner (Schreiner's Restaurant, Inc., Fond du Lac, WI)

□ **State Relations:** Richard E. Marriott (Marriott Corp., Washington, DC)

□ **Strategic Plan:** Harris "Bud" Rusitzky (Serv-Rite Food Service and Consulting, Pittsford, NY)

□ **Technical Services:** Joseph C. Gentile (Seafood Shanty Restaurants, Bensalem, PA)

□ **Task Force on Alcohol Awareness:** William H. Latham (Olde English Pubs Ltd., Jackson, MI)

□ **Task Force on Monterey Wine Festival:** Richard E. Cregar (Cregar Enterprises, Orchard Lake, MI)

□ **Task Force on Public Affairs Conference:** Robert S. Wood (Bob Evans Farms, Inc., Columbus, OH); **effective October 1:** Joseph K. Fassler (Greyhound Food Management, Inc., Phoenix, AZ)

□ **Task Force on Public Health:** Robert A. Kozlowski (Canteen Co., Chicago, IL)

From left: New Vice President Harris "Bud" Rusitzky, outgoing President Michael Grisanti and new President Jim Peterson confer during the Board meeting held in conjunction with the Show.

Association membership elects new officers, directors

At the annual membership meeting held during the 69th National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, the association membership elected new officers. Seven foodservice industry leaders were also elected to serve three-year terms on the board of directors. The new directors, are:

□ James W. Britt (Blazers Restaurant, Greenwood, SC)

□ Herman Cain (Godfather's Pizza, Inc., Omaha, NE)

□ Bruce Cotton (Jerrico, Inc., Lexington, KY)

□ Bill Leichsenring, Jr. (Ox Yoke Inn, Inc., Amana, IA)

□ Tony May (Tony May Group, New York, NY)

□ Gerard Pain (La Chaumiere, Washington, DC)

□ William P. Zoidis (Pilot's Grill, Inc., Bangor, ME)

Incoming president Jim Peterson (left) and board member John Farquharson exchange quips at the Grand Banquet held in honor of the new president at the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago. It was a festive evening of great food, great company and great entertainment featuring Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers.

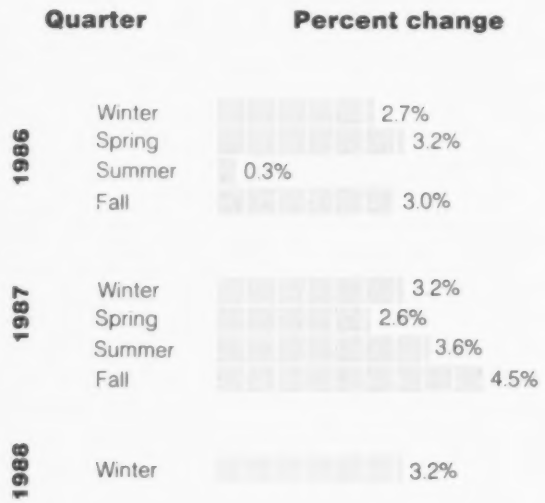
December-January-February

CREST* REPORT

Percent change in quarterly traffic

Winter 1986—Winter 1988

Customer traffic rose 3.2 percent during the winter quarter



Note: *Percent change is over same period of the prior year.*

Source: NPD Crest, *Household Report*, Winter 1986-Winter 1988

The winter quarter shaped up to be a relatively healthy one for the restaurant industry, with sales up 7.2 percent and traffic counts up 3.2 percent compared with the winter quarter of 1987. This solid showing followed a strong fall quarter in which traffic rose 4.5 percent. And for the first quarter since winter 1987, all restaurant segments registered positive traffic growth.

The growth in total traffic was mostly attributable to a rise in off-premises dining at quickservice restaurants. Off-premises customer counts rose in all segments in the fall quarter, jumping 8.3 percent. Upscale establishments, however, were the only ones to record a gain in on-premises traffic.

As in the fall quarter, breakfast was the weakest meal period, with customer counts dipping 1.9 percent. Traffic at dinner advanced 4.0 percent, and customer counts at lunch continued upward as well.

**CREST stands for Consumer Reports on Eating Share Trends, a diary survey conducted by one of the NPD marketing and research companies.*

Winter quarter highlights

□ **Customer traffic** advanced 4.2 percent at quickservice restaurants during the winter quarter, a lower rate than the 7.3 percent recorded during the fall. In comparison, both midscale and upscale eateries improved their performance since the fall quarter, with customer counts rising 0.5 and 3.8 percent, respectively, compared with winter 1987.

The upscale segment was the only restaurant group to record increased on-premises business in the winter quarter, as on-premises traffic rose 3.6 percent at these establishments, compared with declines of 0.3 and 2.1 percent, respectively, at quickservice and midscale operations. Off-premises traffic showed gains across all segments, led by a 17.6 percent jump at midscale eateries. Off-premises dining increased 7.4 percent at quickservice establishments and 7.1 percent at upscale operations.

Customer traffic increased at lunch and dinner but declined at breakfast. The increased traffic at dinner was the result of a 10.2 percent jump in off-premises dining. On-premises counts at dinner declined. Traffic increased 4.6 percent at lunch, with gains in both on and off-premises visits. A 7.3 percent rise in off-premises breakfast traffic was offset by a 5.8 percent decline in on-premises customer counts.

□ **Sales** at restaurants were propelled by a 10.5 percent increase at quickservice establishments. Midscale restaurants showed a modest sales gain of 3.2 percent, and upscale establishments recorded a

1988 winter quarter highlights

Gains in off-premises traffic led a quarter of healthy growth

	Percent change* in . . .				
	Total Traffic	On-premises traffic	Off-premises traffic	Sales	Average check size
Total restaurants	3.2%	−0.5%	8.3%	7.2%	3.9%
Quickservice	4.2	−0.3	7.4	10.5	6.2
Midscale	0.5	−2.1	17.6	3.2	2.6
Upscale	3.8	3.6	7.1	5.5	1.6
• Moderate check	3.3	3.0	6.2	5.2	1.9
• Higher-check	5.3	4.6	24.4	5.9	0.6
Breakfast	−1.9	−5.8	7.3	5.3	7.1
Lunch	4.6	1.3	10.4	10.0	4.9
Dinner	4.0	−1.1	10.2	5.9	1.9

**Percent change is over same period of the prior year*

Source: NPD CREST, *Household Report*, Winter 1988

strong 5.5 percent increase.

Sales at lunch continued to rise in the winter quarter, advancing 10.0 percent. Breakfast sales were up as well, increasing 5.3 percent. They picked up in the fall quarter after having been flat during the summer months. The dinner meal period also recorded higher sales this winter than a year ago.

□ The **average check size** for all restaurants rose to $3.71 in the winter quarter, a 3.9 percent increase over winter 1987. Quick-service restaurants saw the largest gain in average check size: 6.2 percent to $2.73. The average check size was also up at midscale and upscale establishments. to $4.33 and $9.36, representing gains of 2.6 and 1.6 percent, respectively.

The average check size rose 7.1 percent at breakfast to $2.40, the largest gain recorded by a meal period. At lunch, the average check size increased by 4.9 percent to $3.42. The average check size at dinner rose slightly to $4.74.

□ **Promotions** were used on 18.4 percent of all restaurant occasions this past winter, a slight dip from the 18.8 percent rate recorded during the winter quarter of 1987. Deal usage during the current winter quarter was highest at quickservice operations, reaching 20.7 percent. The deal rate was slightly higher at midscale restaurants (14.2 percent) than at upscale establishments (13.6 percent).

During the winter quarter, promotions were used most frequently at dinner, where they accounted for 23.5 percent of all restaurant occasions. Patrons used promotions on 14.9 percent of breakfast occasions and 17.0 percent of lunch occasions.

Cafeterias: poised for growth

Cafeterias have found willing diners among senior Americans and are adept at meeting consumer demand for healthy, inexpensive and varied fare—particularly for lunch. Several years of steady growth are an indication of the solid status of cafeterias. With the increased numbers of seniors in the U.S. population in coming years, cafeterias are poised for even more growth.

Commercial cafeterias have experienced slow but steady advances in sales since 1982. From 1982 to 1987, sales have moved upward by 36 percent to $3.7 billion, with much of this increase offset by inflation. Real sales growth at cafeterias has been in the 2 to 3 percent range since 1982.

Cafeterias are expected to maintain this moderate pace of growth in 1988.

Cafeterias popular among seniors

Cafeterias have the widest appeal among consumers 65 years old and older. This segment of the population accounted for more than one out of every four visits to cafeterias in 1987. According to CREST figures, cafeterias have gained in popularity with these diners; in 1982, only 21 percent of all cafeteria diners were 65 years old or older.

Cafeterias also have a substantial following among 50 to 64-year-olds. In 1987, 24 percent of customers at cafeterias were between 50 and 64 years of age, compared with 16 percent for all restaurants. What is bringing in these older patrons? Nutritious and healthful food, good value and extensive menus all contribute to the popularity of cafeterias among seniors. In addition, cafeterias allow for more leisurely dining, which often appeals to older customers.

Other groups who frequent cafeterias

More women than men tend to visit cafeterias. In 1987, 57 percent of all cafeteria diners were women. Cafeterias also appeal to lower-income households. In 1987, 39 percent of all cafeteria patrons had household incomes under $20,000. However, cafeterias attract some interest from upper income households as well. In 1987, one out of every four cafeteria visitors had income in excess of $40,000.

Smaller households were most likely to frequent cafeterias. This is not surprising, given the high percentage of cafeteria visitors among seniors whose children are grown and have moved away. Seventy percent of cafeteria diners in 1987 came from single or two-person households, well above the industry average of 57 percent. Roughly nine out of every 10 parties at cafeterias consisted of adults only.

The frequent cafeteria goer also tends not to be

Breakdown of cafeteria eater occasions by region, 1987

Cafeterias are popular in the South and the Midwest

Region	Percent of cafeteria eater occasions	Percent of all restaurant eater occasions
New England	4%	5%
Mid-Atlantic	10	15
East North Central	14	18
West North Central	12	7
South Atlantic	20	18
East South Central	6	6
West South Central	17	12
Mountain	5	5
Pacific	10	14

Source: NPD CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1987

actively employed. In 1987, 35 percent of all cafeteria patrons were not working, a marked increase from the 21 percent recorded in 1982. This dramatic increase can be partially explained by the increased number of elderly patrons at cafeterias, many of whom are retired. Another factor could be the recent rise in unemployment in oil-producing regions of the United States—areas in which cafeterias enjoy higher popularity.

A variety of food items

Cafeteria menus center on traditional homestyle foods that cover all the main food groups. Hot vegetables and side dish salads were the most popular menu items at cafeterias in 1987. Coffee was the principal selling beverage, with soft drinks not far behind. Sandwiches were a favorite meal item, ordered on nearly one in five occasions. Chicken, beef and seafood shared relatively high levels of popularity among cafeteria customers, as did old-fashioned mashed potatoes. For dessert, customers favored pies.

Despite its growing popularity in the industry overall, ethnic food consumption at cafeterias has not changed since 1982. However, because seniors have greatly expanded their interest in ethnic food, cafeterias are likely to increase their ethnic offerings in years ahead.

More takeout in future?

Despite rapid growth in off-premises dining, cafeteria operators have not concentrated efforts on penetrating this market. The percentage of customers taking their cafeteria purchases off-premises for consumption has remained unchanged since 1982: 13 percent.

However, it is likely that cafeteria operators will increase their focus on meeting the demand for takeout meals. Some chains have recently remodeled their units to reduce long lines and quicken service. This may help lure takeout customers.

Most business is at lunch

Cafeterias do a major portion of their business during lunch. In 1987 nearly 60 percent of cafeteria traffic was for lunch, compared with 36 percent for the entire restaurant industry. About one-third of all cafeteria customers came for dinner. Snack and breakfast use was minimal.

Weekdays were the favorite time for cafeteria visits. Almost three out of every four visits in 1987 occurred during the week versus 66 percent for all restaurants.

Promotional use below industry average

Use of promotions at cafeterias is less than the industry average. In 1987, 12 percent of visits to cafeterias involved the use of promotions, a lower figure than the 19 percent reported for the entire industry.

Average check size—below average

An examination of check size averages shows why cafeterias have gained a reputation for price and

Annual sales at commercial cafeterias

Cafeterias have seen steady sales growth since 1982

	Sales (000)	Percent change from prior year
1982	$2,711,686	5.4%
1983	2,920,486	7.7
1984	3,165,807	8.4
1985	3,286,108	3.8
1986	3,470,130	5.6
1987	3,678,338	6.0
1988 (estimated)	3,913,752	6.4

Source: National Restaurant Association

Average per-person check

Cafeteria check size has risen more than the midscale and industry averages

	1982	1987	Percent change 1982 to 1987
Cafeterias	$2.77	$3.58	29%
All midscale restaurants	3.70	4.28	16
All restaurants	3.15	3.52	12

Source: NPD CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1982, 1987

Percent of cafeteria eater occasions by age group, 1987

Cafeterias are especially popular with older diners

Age Group	Cafeterias	All restaurants
Under 6 years	3%	8%
6 to 12 years	4	10
13 to 17 years	3	6
18 to 24 years	5	8
25 to 34 years	14	19
35 to 49 years	19	21
50 to 64 years	24	16
65+	27	11

Source: NPD CREST, *Annual Household Report*, 1987

Please return hourly wage survey

The National Restaurant Association's 1988 Survey of Wage Rates for Hourly Employees has been mailed to association members. If you received a questionnaire, please fill it out and send it to the association's research department as soon as possible.

Results of this survey are used to compile data on hourly employees' wages for 15 different foodservice positions on a national, regional and statewide basis.

value. In 1987, the average check per person at cafeterias was $3.58, 16 percent below the midscale average of $4.28. Cafeterias have, however, experienced a steep increase in check size. From 1982 to 1987, average check size per person at cafeterias rose 29 percent, whereas check sizes for all midscale restaurants and for total restaurants moved upward 16 percent and 12 percent, respectively. The increase in cafeteria check size is partly attributable to a 4 percent rise from 1982 to 1987 in the average number of items ordered. The total restaurant market, on the other hand, has actually seen a decline in average number of items ordered during this period.

Cafeterias: a regional phenomenon

Cafeterias are most favored in the Southern and Midwestern areas of the country. The West South Central and West North Central regions gained a disproportionately large share of eater occasions at cafeterias in 1987. Cafeterias, are also popular in the South Atlantic region, where 20 percent of all cafeteria eater occasions occurred.

Some of the slow growth recorded by cafeterias is due to the location of many of these restaurants in the Rust and Energy Belts, areas of the nation that have been hit hard economically over the last few years. However, with a recent resurgence of U.S. manufacturing exports and an expected steadying of oil prices, these regions should experience increased economic growth. This should benefit cafeteria operators and help sustain sales increases.

—Sebastian O'Kelley

The foodservice industry 1986: A brief review

For the 19th consecutive year, the National Restaurant Association has prepared information on the size and scope of the foodservice industry, including sales and purchases for major markets, number of establishments and alcoholic beverage sales. The figures and analyses reported here provide a summary of the industry's performance during 1986. To obtain more information on foodservice in 1986, see the accompanying box which tells how to order a free copy of the complete report.*

In a year of moderate economic growth, **foodservice industry sales** reached $187.1 billion in 1986, up 7.0 percent from the year before. Real sales, adjusted for inflation, gained 3.0 percent, just barely exceeding gross national product (GNP) real growth of 2.9 percent. Sales growth was larger in 1986 than in 1985, when a lower 2.2 percent gain in real sales occurred. Overall, 1986 was the sixth consecutive year of real growth for the industry.

The proportion of the food dollar spent away from home continued to climb, reaching a record 41.1 percent in 1986, up from 40.8 percent the previous year. Rapid growth in the takeout market continued to push the increase in spending on food away from home. In 1986, the proportion of disposable personal income spent on food away from home rose slightly to 5.53 percent, up from 5.51 percent in 1985.

Menu prices, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for food away from home, gained 4.0 percent in 1986, almost equal to the 3.9 percent advance recorded in 1985.

Customer traffic at restaurants advanced 2.1 percent in 1986, after increasing 1.0 percent in 1985. In 1986, the spring and fall quarters showed the strongest annual traffic growth, 3.2 and 3.0 percent, respectively. Traffic during the winter quarter rose 2.7 percent, and customer counts for the summer months moved upward 0.3 percent.

In the **Commercial Foodservice Group,** food and drink sales peaked at $164.5 billion—up 7.6 percent over 1985. The Commercial Group was responsible for 98.1 percent of total real growth in foodservice sales and accounted for 87.9 percent of all industry sales. Real growth for this segment was 3.3 percent, up from 2.6 percent in 1985.

Eating place sales, totaling $120.1 billion in 1986, increased 7.6 percent over 1985 and accounted for 64.2 percent of total foodservice sales, up from 63.8 percent in 1985. After adjusting for inflation, sales for this group advanced 3.4 percent, somewhat higher than 1985's 2.7 percent increase but lower than 1984's 5.4 percent gain.

Percent change in foodservice industry sales, 1985-1986

Limited menu restaurants in 1986 exhibited strong growth

	Current dollars	Real dollars*
Foodservice industry	7.0%	3.0%
Commercial foodservice	7.6	3.3
Eating places	7.6	3.4
• restaurant, lunchrooms	6.6	2.2
• limited-menu restaurants	9.1	5.1
Institutional foodservice	3.0	0.4
Military foodservice	5.5	1.5

**Adjusted for inflation*
Source: National Restaurant Association; Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc.

***The statistical information and analyses for the National Restaurant Association's study on the size and scope of the foodservice industry in 1986 were prepared in consultation with the research firm of Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc.**

Estimated food and drink sales and purchases, 1986

# of units	Type of establishment	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1985	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1986	Percent gain (loss)	Estimated food and drink purchases (000) 1986
	Group I: Commercial Foodservice[1]				
	Eating places				
126,514[2]	Restaurants, lunchrooms	$ 58,444,122	$ 62,301,434	6.6%	$ 21,355,810
126,125	Limited-menu restaurants	47,190,521	51,484,858	9.1	16,594,599
6,137	Commercial cafeterias	3,286,108	3,470,130	5.6	1,217,304
3,604	Social caterers	1,301,600	1,390,109	6.8	489,805
8,318	Ice cream, frozen custard stands	1,375,857	1,477,670	7.4	419,658
270,698	**Total—Eating places**	**$111,598,208**	**$120,124,201**	**7.6%**	**$40,077,176**
32,308[3]	Bars and taverns	$ 8,428,281	$ 8,976,119	6.5%	$ 418,512[4]
303,006	**Total—Eating and drinking places**	**$120,026,489**	**$129,100,320[5]**	**7.6%**	**$40,495,688**
	Food contractors				
	Manufacturing and industrial plants	$ 2,721,072	$ 2,824,473	3.8%	$ 1,198,904
	Commercial and office buildings	894,308	981,056	9.7	417,439
	Hospitals and nursing homes	1,184,410	1,262,581	6.6	465,751
	Colleges and universities	1,738,127	1,882,392	8.3	583,710
	Primary and secondary schools	886,382	935,133	5.5	335,341
	In-transit foodservice (airlines)	716,139	798,431	11.5	383,199[6]
	Recreation and sports centers	1,319,773	1,410,732	6.9	452,845
9,026[7]	**Total—Food contractors**	**$ 9,460,211**	**$ 10,094,798**	**6.7%**	**$ 3,837,189**
	Lodging places				
15,704	Hotel restaurants	$ 8,748,054	$ 9,404,158	7.5%	$ 2,895,720
1,777	Motor hotel restaurants	741,443	754,327	1.7	234,001
8,904	Motel restaurants	1,209,023	1,224,740	1.3	390,065
26,385	**Total—Lodging places**	**$ 10,698,520**	**$ 11,383,225**	**6.4%**	**$ 3,519,786**
	Retail hosts				
10,468	Drug and proprietary store restaurants	$ 437,947	$ 449,334	2.6%	$ 157,716
1,562	General merchandise store restaurants	65,334	68,339	4.6	23,714
4,932	Department store restaurants	1,051,905	1,091,877	3.8	383,249
3,651	Variety store restaurants	232,704	224,792	(3.4)	78,902
4,155	Food stores (except grocery)	186,087	194,461	4.5	60,283
41,867	Grocery store restaurants	2,465,722	2,988,455	21.2	962,282
30,490	Gasoline service stations	1,290,875	1,527,105	18.3	491,728
8,525	Misc. retail (liquor, cigar, etc.[8])	465,062	507,848	9.2	161,496
105,650	**Total—Retail hosts**	**$ 6,195,636**	**$ 7,052,211**	**13.8%**	**$ 2,319,370**
	Recreation and sports foodservice				
2,785	Drive-in movies	$ 227,974	$ 228,658	0.3%	$ 66,604
3,822	Bowling lanes	713,018	732,982	2.8	246,282
N/A	Recreation and sports centers	1,016,126	1,093,352	7.6	350,966
6,607	**Total—Recreation and sports foodservice**	**$ 1,957,118**	**$ 2,054,992**	**5.0%**	**$ 663,852**
	All other foodservice				
3,088	Vending and non-store retailers[9]	$ 3,898,901	$ 4,156,228	6.6%	$ 1,263,992
N/A	Mobile caterers	627,266	668,038	6.5	206,424
3,088	**Total—All other foodservice**	**$ 4,526,167**	**$ 4,824,266**	**6.6%**	**$ 1,470,416**
453,762	**Total—Group I**	**$152,864,141**	**$164,509,812**	**7.6%**	**$52,306,301**

Footnotes

1. Data are given only for establishments with payroll.
2. Figures are latest census-area reports or merchandise-line detail counts or updates when reliable data become available.
3. Unit count includes only those establishments serving food; however, sales figure is for all bars and taverns with payroll.
4. Food only. Cost of alcoholic beverages totaled $2,827,477,000.
5. Food and drink sales for nonpayroll establishments totaled $3,626,298,000, with eating places accounting for $2,594,068,000 and drinking places $1,032,230,000.
6. Food purchases only.
7. Individual businesses, not locations. Contract feeders are included in eating place totals in all Bureau of Census publications although their sales volume figures are significantly understated.
8. Includes SIC 59 except 591 and 596.
9. Includes sales of hot foods, sandwiches, pastries, coffee and other hot beverages.
10. School lunch commodities furnished in the calendar year 1986 under Secs. 6, 32 and 416 were worth $852,454,162. In addition, 161,948,906 half-pints of milk worth $15,458,011 were supplied.
11. Total number of colleges and universities which have foodservice whether contracted or not.
12. Represents sales or commercial equivalent to employees.
13. Sales (commercial equivalent) calculated for nursing homes and homes for aged only. All others in the grouping make no charge for food served.
14. All 50 states plus the District of Columbia.

** These institutions make no charge for food served.

Estimated food and drink sales and purchases, 1986

# of units	Type of establishment	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1985	Estimated food and drink sales (000) 1986	Percent gain (loss)	Estimated food and drink purchases (000) 1986
	Group II: Institutional Foodservice—Business, educational, government or institutional organizations that operate their own foodservice				
	Employee foodservice				
3,573	Industrial and commercial organizations	$ 1,682,004	$ 1,693,778	0.7%	$ 728,073
391	Seagoing ships (1,000+ tons)	40,857	37,710	(7.7)	22,626
4,248	Inland waterway vessels	247,869	244,399	(1.4)	146,639
8,212	**Total—Employee foodservice**	**$ 1,970,730**	**$ 1,975,887**	**0.3%**	**$ 897,338**
	Educational foodservice				
91,776	Public and parochial elementary and secondary schools (90,180 national school lunch program[10])	$ 2,918,628	$ 3,060,127	4.8%	$ 3,040,276
1,041	Public colleges and universities[11]	2,096,353	2,173,080	3.7	851,608
1,667	Private colleges and universities[11]	963,226	1,020,056	5.9	450,487
94,484	**Total—Educational foodservice**	**$ 5,978,207**	**$ 6,253,263**	**4.6%**	**$ 4,342,371**
	Transportation foodservice				
58	Passenger/cargo liners	$ 189,528	$ 217,578	14.8%	$ 119,668
98	Airlines	657,856	700,617	6.5	349,266
2	Railroads	46,044	49,405	7.3	22,847
158	**Total—Transportation foodservice**	**$ 893,428**	**$ 967,600**	**8.3%**	**$ 491,781**
	Hospital foodservice				
4,157	Voluntary and proprietary hospitals	$ 5,124,485	$ 5,192,895	1.3%	$ 2,077,158
1,521	State and local short-term hospitals[12]	746,008	749,005	0.4	493,632
771	Long-term, general, TB and psychiatric hospitals	839,248	832,130	(0.8)	332,852
342	Federal hospitals[12]	394,652	396,155	0.4	304,342
6,791	**Total—Hospital foodservice**	**$ 7,104,393**	**$ 7,170,185**	**0.9%**	**$ 3,207,984**
29,169	Nursing homes, homes for the aged, blind, orphans, mentally and physically handicapped[13]	$ 3,001,608	$ 3,097,659	3.2%	$ 1,903,078
	Miscellaneous foodservice				
10,310	Clubs	$ 1,536,913	$ 1,619,906	5.4%	$ 636,727
2,806	Sporting and recreation camps	122,830	126,515	3.0	75,909
15,210	Community centers	417,231	450,192	7.9	531,218
N/A	Convents and seminaries	***	***	***	90,040
28,326	**Total—Miscellaneous foodservice**	**$ 2,076,974**	**$ 2,196,613**	**5.8%**	**$ 1,333,894**
	Penal institutions				
791	Federal and state prisons	***	***	***	$ 470,762
3,338	Jails	***	***	***	363,184
4,129	**Total—Penal institutions**	*******	*******	*******	**$ 833,946**
171,269	**Total—Group II**	**$ 21,025,340**	**$ 21,661,207**	**3.0%**	**$13,010,392**
625,031	**Total—Groups I and II**	**$173,889,481**	**$186,171,019**	**7.1%**	**$65,316,693**
	Food furnished to foodservice employees in Groups I and II	***	***	***	$ 4,294,800
625,031	**Total—Groups I, II and FSE**	**$173,889,481**	**$186,171,019**	**7.1%**	**$69,611,493**
	Group III: Military Foodservice				
N/A	Defense personnel	***	***	***	$ 1,992,296
700	Officers' and NCO clubs ("open mess")[14]	$ 579,563	$ 610,280	5.3%	205,394
556	Military exchange foodservice	297,694	314,960	5.8	117,512
1,256	**Total—Group III**	**$ 877,257**	**$ 925,240**	**5.5%**	**$ 2,315,202**
626,287	**GRAND TOTAL**	**$174,766,738**	**$187,096,259**	**7.0%**	**$71,926,695**

Source: National Restaurant Association Malcolm M. Knapp, Inc

Sales at **limited menu restaurants** grew 9.1 percent in 1986 as total sales exceeded $51.4 billion. Limited menu restaurants continued to increase their share of total foodservice sales; their share rose to 27.5 percent in 1986—up from 14 percent in 1970.

Restaurant and lunchroom sales gained 6.6 percent in 1986 and totaled $62.3 billion. Although slightly higher than the sales gain reported in 1985, the 1986 figure was well below the 9.1 percent sales increase that occurred in 1984. While personal income was up 4.0 percent in 1986, a strong rise in spending on consumer durable goods reduced dollars available for other personal consumption. Real sales at restaurants and lunchrooms rose 2.2 percent in 1986.

Grocery stores, which includes some convenience stores, maintained the top position as the industry's growth leader, with a 21.2 percent boost in food and drink sales in 1986. Since 1981, annual foodservice sales increases at grocery stores have been well above 20 percent. The continued growth of convenience stores within gas stations helped hike these establishments' food and drink sales by 18.3 percent. Other segments that had strong sales performances in 1986 included foodservice operations at airlines, commercial and office building locations, passenger/cargo liners and community centers.

Sales for the **Institutional Foodservice Group** climbed 3.0 percent in 1986 to $22.0 billion, as real growth inched upward from 0.1 percent in 1985 to 0.4 percent. Foodservice operations at transportation facilities were the group leaders, registering a nominal sales advance of 8.3 percent and a real sales advance of 7.1 percent. Sales at hospitals and on seagoing ships continued to decline.

Food and drink sales for the **Military Foodservice Group** continued to advance, topping $925 million, a gain of 5.5 percent over the 1985 level. The increase was in part due to the continued rise in the number of military officers and U.S.-based troops on active duty.

To order the report

The National Restaurant Association's detailed report, *The Foodservice Industry: 1986 in Review*, contains extensive data on the foodservice industry in 1986, including an analysis of all sectors of the eating place market as well as lodging places, educational foodservice, employee foodservice, health care foodservice, recreation foodservice and military foodservice.

Members may receive up to five free copies of the report by calling the Information Service and Library at 1-800-424-5156 or by writing to the Research Department, National Restaurant Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Additional copies are $5 each. The report is $10 for nonmembers. Credit card orders may be placed by calling the Information Service. All other orders must be accompanied by a check or money order. For historical industry data, see the National Restaurant Association's *Foodservice Numbers: A Statistical Digest for the Foodservice Industry* (catalog number CS025). This publication includes sales, purchases and number of units for more than 50 sectors of foodservice from 1970 through 1984.

Senior patrons: a profile

As their numbers increase, consumers above the age of 65, often touted as "the gray market," will become an increasingly important segment to restaurateurs over the next few years. In recent years, these consumers have increased their visits to restaurants at a faster-than-average pace.

Household discretionary income by age, 1984

Senior households are less likely to have discretionary income, but seniors that have it record the greatest per capita levels among all age groups

Age group	Proportion of households with discretionary income	Discretionary income per capita
All age groups	31.5%	$3,713
Under 25 years	21.0	2,833
25 to 29	26.1	2,867
30 to 34	34.8	2,799
35 to 39	30.2	2,964
40 to 44	35.5	3,056
45 to 49	36.1	3,384
50 to 54	37.7	4,017
55 to 59	40.7	4,889
60 to 64	33.5	4,923
65+	26.9	5,633

Source: *A Marketers Guide to Discretionary Income*, The Conference Board/U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984

The Census Bureau estimates that the number of Americans 65 years old and older will increase by 17 percent between 1987 and 2000 and individuals 75 years and older will increase by 36 percent. In comparison, the under-65 population is projected to increase by only 9 percent in that same 13-year span. Even more dramatic will be the growth of this population during the first few decades. Americans 65 and older are forecast to number more than 50 million in 2020 and 65 million by 2030, more than one-fifth of the total population. The current "graying of America" is merely a foreshadowing of the dramatic demographic changes to come.

The bottom line

But what does this demographic change mean for the restaurant industry? Can foodservice operators expect increased or decreased business as a result of the aging U.S. population? The news is mixed.

According to CREST data, seniors are relatively light users of restaurants. Although they account for

13 percent of all households, 65 to 74-year-olds represent only 8 percent of all restaurant visits. Consumers 75 and older visit eating establishments even less, accounting for 3 percent of total restaurant traffic and 9 percent of all households. In addition, consumers 65 years old and older tend to spend less on food away from home than do younger individuals. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Consumer Expenditure Survey for 1986* found that while per-person weekly expenditures for restaurant food by 45 to 54-year-olds and 55 to 64-year-olds were $9.16 and $8.72, respectively, spending per capita by 65 to 74-year-olds was $8.24. Consumers 75 and older spent even less weekly on restaurant food: $5.85 per person in 1986.

Although seniors use restaurants less frequently than do younger individuals, the growth in their visits outpaced the average for all consumers between 1982 and 1986. During this period, total traffic at restaurants advanced 11 percent, and visits by those 65 and older increased 14 percent. This indicates that older patrons could become a driving force behind expansion in the industry as their numbers increase. The news is especially good for quickservice operators. In 1986 consumers 65 and older visited quickservice operations 30 percent more often than in 1982.

Income

According to the Bureau of the Census, households headed by individuals 65 and older recorded the lowest median incomes of any age group in 1986: $13,845 compared with $26,776 for 55 to 64-year-olds. This, however, is mostly due to the smaller size of senior households. In terms of income per household member, these individuals do not fare so poorly. The per capita annual income of $12,096 for 65 to 74-year-olds was even higher than that recorded by 35 to 44-year-olds. Nevertheless, a large share of seniors have low levels of income. Thirty-six percent of all households headed by persons 65 and older had incomes of less than $10,000 per year in 1986, double the percentage for 55 to 64-year-olds and more than triple the percentage for 45 to 54-year-olds. In fact, nearly 70 percent of seniors had household incomes below $20,000. In comparison, only 6 percent of these consumers had household incomes of $50,000 or more in 1986. The unequal distribution of income among individuals 65 and older makes these seniors difficult to stereotype.

The current "graying of America" is merely a foreshadowing of the dramatic demographic changes to come.

But income is not always the only source of financial support. Wealth in the form of property, stocks, bonds and other investments is also a contributor to one's economic situation. Census Bureau figures indicate that households headed by persons 65 and older had the second-highest level of median net worth in 1984—$60,266. More than 30 percent of those 65 and older had a household net worth in excess of $100,000; and on the opposite end of the scale, fewer senior households had a net worth below $25,000 than did households headed by either 35 to 44-year-olds or 45 to 54-year-olds.

Discretionary income highest for seniors

The solid financial shape of many seniors is best seen in their high level of discretionary income.* A 1984 joint study by the Census Bureau and The Conference Board found that among households with discretionary income, those headed by individuals 65 and older claimed the highest per-person level of excess funds of any age group and accounted for nearly one-fifth of the total discretionary income in the United States. The $5,633 per capita recorded by senior households was nearly double the $3,056 for households headed by 40 to 44-year-olds. But it is the minority of consumers 65 and older who have discretionary income. In fact, individuals 65 and older are less likely than younger consumers to have discretionary funds. Whereas 27 percent of households headed by persons 65 and older had discretionary income, 41 percent of households headed by 55 to 59-year-olds and 36 percent of households headed by 40 to 44-year-olds had such excess funds.

Family life

Living arrangements for mature Americans differ sharply. Seniors over 75 are much more likely to have experienced the death of a spouse than are younger seniors. Although 62 percent of 65 to 74-year-olds are married, the majority of individuals 75 and older (51 percent) are widowed, and less than 40 percent are married couples. In addition, a high proportion of seniors live in nonfamily households (a person living alone or with nonrelatives only). Only 18 percent of all households headed by 45 to 54-year-olds are nonfamily households, compared with 39 percent for 65 to 74-year-olds and 56 percent for persons 75 and older.

Family households headed by seniors are marked by their small size. More than 80 percent consist of only two members compared with 58 percent for households headed by 55 to 64-year-olds.

Lifestyle

Life expectancy for the average American has increased greatly. In 1985, the average individual reaching the age of 60 could expect to live to be 80 years old. The majority of the 65 and older population lead healthy, robust lives and are pursuing an increasing array of leisure-time activities. Intent on "enjoying the good life," seniors have been increasingly targeted by the travel industry, leisure products companies, sporting clubs and related service industries. Simply put, the lifestyles of today's older Americans are vastly different from those of the past.

Midscale restaurants favored

Midscale restaurants fare best with the 65-and-older consumer, according to CREST data. In 1986 individuals in this age group

**The Census Bureau/Conference Board study defines discretionary income as the amount of money that would permit a family to maintain a standard of living comfortably higher than the average for similar families.*

Meal occasions by meal period and restaurant segment, 1986

Seniors visit restaurants on the weekdays and for lunch more often than do younger consumers

	Age groups				
	35-44	**45-54**	**55-64**	**65-74**	**75+**
Breakfast/AM snacks	14%	16%	16%	16%	12%
Lunch	37	36	37	43	47
Dinner	38	39	39	34	35
PM snacks	11	9	8	7	7
Weekday	57	56	57	63	63
Weekend	43	44	43	37	37
Quickservice	68	57	49	46	43
Midscale	23	32	40	44	49
Upscale	9	11	11	10	8

Source: National Restaurant Association CREST survey, 1987

visited midscale eateries on nearly half of their restaurant occasions. The appeal of midscale establishments to mature consumers most likely results from their image as price-value restaurants. In addition, restaurant meals may be more of a social occasion to mature customers than to younger consumers who often view eating away from home as a matter of convenience. The relatively low use of takeout by seniors lends credence to this idea. Whereas 45 percent of all restaurant visits by 35 to 44-year-olds were for takeout, only 20 percent of visits by consumers 65 and older were for off-premises consumption. However, this low utilization of takeout may mark an opportunity for operators. By appealing to older consumers who have difficulty getting about, delivery can be offered as an alternative to home-prepared meals.

Quickservice restaurants, although less popular with persons 65 years old and older than with younger consumers, still captured a large share of visits by seniors in 1986: 46 percent for 65 to 74-year-olds and 43 percent for those 75 and older. Quickservice chicken and fish places are especially popular with seniors.

In 1986, upscale establishments were visited by 65 to 74-year-olds on about 11 percent of all restaurant occasions, a proportion similar to that for 45 to 64-year-olds. Visit frequency dips, however, for consumers 75 and older who patronized upscale establishments on 8 percent of their total restaurant occasions. Within the upscale segment, varied-menu restaurants were particularly popular. Patrons 65 and older visited this type of establishment on nearly half of their total upscale occasions. Also popular with older consumers were upscale hotel restaurants. Consumers 75 and older patronized hotel restaurants on nearly one in five upscale visits and were also more likely than other consumers to visit upscale fish restaurants.

Lunch and weekday patrons

Older patrons offer restaurant operators an excellent opportunity to increase their traffic during off-peak hours. The high percentage of retirees in this consumer group means that meal periods are not determined by work schedules. According to CREST data, lunch and weekdays are the most popular times for older Americans to eat out at restaurants. In 1986, more than 40 percent of all visits by consumers 65 and older were for lunch, and nearly two-thirds were during the week, the highest percentages of any age group. Thirty-five to 44-year-olds, by contrast, visited restaurants for lunch on 37 percent of all meal occasions and on weekdays for 57 percent. In fact, patrons 65 and older were the only consumers to visit restaurants more for lunch than for dinner. For consumers 75 and older, lunch accounted for nearly half of all visits.

In fact, patrons 65 and older were the only consumers to visit restaurants more for lunch than for dinner.

Interest in ethnic fare

Although older restaurant patrons appear to have traditional tastes, the tremendous growth in their orders for ethnic fare shows an openness to new dining experiences. According to CREST data, orders by 65 to 74-year-olds for the following ethnic foods increased sharply between 1982 and 1986: pizza by 55 percent, Mexican food by 50 percent, Asian cuisine by 28 percent and pasta by 72 percent. During that same time, consumers 75 and older doubled their orders of pizza, pasta and Mexican food. Even when taking into account the large overall increase in food orders by these consumers, ethnic fare made considerable strides.

Nevertheless, beef, chicken and fish/seafood remain the entrees of choice among these older consumers, each ordered on more than one in 10 restaurant visits. Although it is increasing in popularity, ethnic fare is not ordered nearly as often as are traditional menu items. Pizza, for example, was requested by patrons 65 and older on only 3 percent of all visits in 1986.

In sum

In terms of market size, discretionary income, wealth and leisure time available, older Americans offer restaurant operators an excellent market for their services. And as consumers 65 and older make up a larger proportion of the U.S. population during the next few decades, this market will expand. By targeting these consumers, operators can successfully share in the rewards brought on by the "gray revolution." It will not be long before the relatively well-to-do and restaurant-wise baby boomers of today are the 65-and-older diners of tomorrow.

—Laurence Greenberg

1 NEW ENGLAND

Location: Provincetown, MA
Association member: Joy McNulty
Operation: The Lobster Pot
Profile: Seafood restaurant and bakery
In business: 22 years
Seats: 96
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Joy McNulty, owner of The Lobster Pot on the tip of Cape Cod, says, "Business was up 7 percent in April, and that's pretty amazing because we had the worst weather we've had in years."

Built on piles on the sandy beach, with a panoramic view of the Provincetown Harbor, the Lobster Pot was once a fishing shack. Today, it is so popular people must wait in line to get in. Fresh seafood and (of course) lobster are the specialties, but the menu also includes a Shellfish Algarve and a Portuguese soup, which reflect the Portuguese fishing-village origins of Provincetown. The restaurant's clam chowder has won first place for the past three years in the Cape Cod Chowder Fest.

2 MID ATLANTIC

Location: New York, NY
Association members: Anthony Rubano, Steve Kraidman
Operation: The Beanstalk
Profile: Midscale, casual family restaurant
In business: 11 years
Seats: 225
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Business is fair," says co-owner **Anthony Rubano**. "People are just starting to get the stock-market crash out of their system." But Rubano and his partner Steve Kraidman hope the business will continue to live up to its name.

The Beanstalk, located on New York City's Rockefeller Plaza, has a light, airy California look with a view from its windows of the famous Plaza fountain. Open seven days a week, the restaurant's diverse menu includes fish, pasta and salads.

The Beanstalk uses many different promotions to bring in customers. One example was a rib-eating contest held last year for charity, with members of the New York Knicks as contestants.

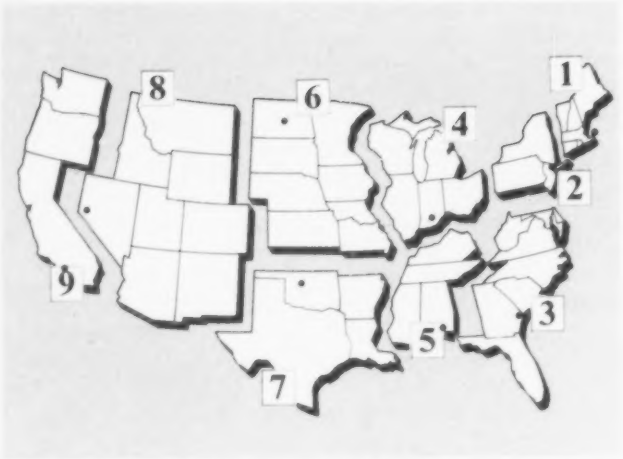
3 SOUTH ATLANTIC

Location: Savannah, GA
Association member: Alexander DiMaio
Operation: The Great Savannah Exposition and the Crossings Restaurant
Profile: Fullservice, midscale restaurant
In business: 4 years
Seats: 230, plus 120 in courtyard
Meal served: Lunch

"Our business is not too bad, although all of Savannah has been rather slow," says **Alexander DiMaio**, director of food and beverage at the Great Savannah Expostion and the Crossings Restaurant. "The city is hoping the return of tourists this summer will bring it up again."

The restaurant, which includes dining areas in train cars, fits right into the atmosphere of the exposition center, which was once an old terminal. In addition to the train cars and a caboose, there is a main dining area and a courtyard where lunch is served in nice weather.

Tourists who come to visit the center's shops and museum are also the restaurant's main customers. After learning the history of old Savannah, they can lunch at the Crossings on such regional food as peanut soup or *Hopping John*, an old Southern dish made with ham hocks, cowpeas and rice. Or they can choose from an elaborate buffet with hot and cold dishes, available Mondays through Fridays.



4 EAST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Corydon, IN
Association members: Jane Mathews, Jerry Bennett
Operation: The Lamplighter on Governor's Square
Profile: Family-style, casual restaurant
In business: 1 1/2 years
Seats: 168
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Business is good at The Lamplighter, housed in a building which used to be an old church. But manager **Jerry Bennett** expects it to get even better when a Main Street restoration project is finished and begins to draw tourists from all over. Located in southern Indiana, 25 miles west of Louisville, Kentucky, The Lamplighter is just two blocks from the downtown area of Corydon—Indiana's first state capital.

The atmosphere may be churchlike—quiet and relaxing—but the restaurant serves a dessert that could be classified as sinful—an ice cream brownie consisting of whipped cream, a brownie, vanilla ice cream, hot fudge sauce, nuts and a cherry. The restaurant has an executive diner's card, good for one year, which permits diners to buy one meal and get one free. Three hundred and seventy-five people out of Corydon's population of 3,500 bought the $32.95 card, which was sold over the phone by a marketing firm.

5 EAST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Orange Beach, AL
Association members: Dale and Helen McMath
Operation: Perdido Pass Restaurant Incorporated
In business: 4 years
Seats: 250, plus 80 in lounge
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

"Fantastic!" is how Perdido Pass co-owner **Helen McMath** describes business at her resort-area restaurant,

located on the Gulf of Mexico coast near the Florida line. "Last year we hit almost $1.9 million dollars in total business."

Vacationers and conventioneers from a nearby Hilton come to enjoy the fresh local seafood, which the restaurant prepares fried, blackened or broiled over mesquite. Or they can order the mesquite-grilled prime rib, filet or a strip sirloin. Other specialties are the crab bisque, always made with fresh crab, and a dessert called Better-Than-Sex-Cake.

Windows on three walls give diners a view of the Gulf just across the road or of the Cotton Bayou on the other side of the restuarant. Drinks are served on a porch overlooking a marina where fishing and pleasure boats dock.

The Perdido Pass is open all year but enjoys its biggest business from Memorial Day to Labor Day, when it must more than double the number of its employees to handle the crowd.

6 WEST NORTH CENTRAL

Location: Bismark, ND
Association members: William J. Wood, John Greff
Operation: The Wood House Incorporated
Profile: Casual restaurant
In business: 18 1/2 years
Seats: 160
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

North Dakota's troubled farm economy and a sporadic oil and gas industry have affected all businesses in the state. "For the situation the economy is in, our business is good," says **John Greff**, general manager of The Wood House. "We're even with last year, and last year was our best since 1984."

Greff describes his restaurant as a cross between fast food and full service. Customers call in their orders over phones attached to the booths, and waitresses bring the food to the tables within 10 minutes. Whether it's a farmer or the governor, The Wood House, with its casual atmosphere, wants to make all its customers feel comfortable. Located half a mile from the state capitol, it attracts legislators, business people and those who live in the neighborhood.

Hamburgers are the main draw, with the meat freshly-ground in the restaurant's kitchen. But customers can also order chicken or steak, homemade soups and pies. "Over the years our menu has changed very little," Greff says. "We don't advertise much," he adds. "Word of mouth does very well for us."

7 WEST SOUTH CENTRAL

Location: Oklahoma City, OK
Association members: Pete Holloway, Paul Kreth, Cara Falcon
Operation: Hungry Peddler
Profile: Midscale fullservice restaurant
In business: 15 years
Seats: 160
Meals served: Lunch, dinner

Travelers staying in Oklahoma City's hotel district make a point of visiting the Hungry Peddler for its prime rib. "There are people who travel here on business who won't go anywhere else," says **Cara Falcon**, general manager. Falcon says the restaurant's business is now coming back after feeling the effects of the oil boom bottoming out. "All of Oklahoma was in a pretty bad spot for a while," she says.

While the restaurant's quiet, intimate atmosphere attracts one kind of crowd, the adjoining club, with a Happy Hour and a wide variety of games, brings in those looking for something livelier. Football enthusiasts enjoy an NTV-system game which gives them a chance to guess the quarterback's next call.

8 MOUNTAIN

Location: Carson City, NV
Association members: Joe Heudorf, Don Tatro
Operation: The Steak House
Profile: One of four restaurants associated with a casino
In business: 26 years
Seats: 100
Meal served: Dinner

The Steak House is one of four restaurants that come under the domain of the Carson Nugget Casino. Casino Food Director **Joe Heudorf** says business is good; but he considers himself lucky that the restaurants can depend on the casino, which is the real money-maker. The restaurants do have a following, however. "We bring them in with the food, then comes the casino." The drawing cards at The Steak House are the fresh vegetables, stone-ground wheat bread, all kinds of desserts made in the on-premises bakery, and steaks, lobster and fresh fish. Two specialties popular with diners are Italian San Remo Scampi sauteed in garlic butter and a fresh halibut grilled and served with a butter-lemon sauce and almonds.

9 PACIFIC

Location: Coronado, CA
Association member: Sharon Considine
Operation: Mexican Village Restaurante y Cantina
Profile: Mexican restaurant
In business: 15 years
Seats: 300
Meals served: Lunch, dinner, breakfast on Sundays

According to owner **Sharon Considine**, this is a banner year for the Mexican Village Restaurante y Cantina, thanks to the beautiful weather, the dollar's poor showing in Europe (which is bringing more tourists than ever to the San Diego area), the January Super Bowl and newly instituted ferry service from San Diego to the island of Coronado.

The restaurant, true to its name, looks like a Mexican village. It began as an 1878 firehouse; but as successive owners acquired neighboring businesses over the years, they added them on, until the restaurant became what it is today—a series of rooms in a two-storied building that add up to 14,000 square feet of space.

There is more history on the inside, where murals and Mexican artifacts decorate the walls. One wall in the lounge is hung with plaques left for luck by squadrons that set forth from nearby North Island Naval Base to fight in World War II and the Korean War.

Mexican food is the house specialty, but the most sought-after item is a romaine salad made with a dressing so popular that naval commanders have been known to stash a case of it on board their ships before long sea journeys.

The cantina part of the restaurant has entertainment nightly, with Sunday set aside as the night senior citizens come to listen and dance to big-band specials.

—Julie Fintel

Breakfast at Ed's

Bubbles, Flo, Roy and the rest of the gang at Ed Debevic's Short Orders Deluxe are up at the crack of dawn to sizzle up some bacon, scramble a coupla eggs, dish up a bowl of Maypo and pour a great cuppa java.

That's right, Ed Debevic's Short Orders Deluxe in Chicago is now serving fresh-baked cinnamon and pecan rolls, "scrambles," oatmeal and pancakes– Monday through Friday. To top off breakfast at Ed's, customers get a "cruiser" cup, a six-ounce coffee cup decorated with Ed's logo and filled with steaming coffee, for the "cruise" to work.

Other extras: shoe shines, a coffee boy to make sure cups are filled and a newspaper stand complete with candy and mints. And, during the summer, customers can even have their cars washed in the back while they eat.

—Sheila King Public Relations

A microwave for popcorn

Everyone knows that the key to making good popcorn is to listen carefully to the popping kernels. When the folks at Litton decided to build a microwave oven just for popcorn, they used the same principle.

The Litton Micro-Popper compact oven features a built-in microphone linked to the oven's computer. The microphone listens to the kernels' popping sound, determines when it has slowed to the proper rate for maximum yield of popped corn and automatically shuts off when the popcorn is ready. The oven, which is designed for vending locations, convenience stores and other self-service outlets, can be used only for popcorn.

—Litton

No-salt Cajun

When Ella Brennan, owner of Commander's Palace restaurant in New Orleans, had a triple bypass, doctors told her to stay away from salt. But she couldn't get used to eating food without seasoning.

She asked her chef Emeril Lagasse to create a no-salt creole seasoning. Soon her employees started stealing the great-tasting, good-for-you spice.

So Ella's firm started selling Sodium-Free Creole Seasoning, a combo of garlic, bell peppers, onions, herbs and spices. McCormick's, the spice company, now makes it. Sodium: 1 mg. per teaspoon.

—American Health

Do-it-yourself ethnic

Americans who try to duplicate at home the authentic ethnic meals they eat in restaurants are often frustrated by an inability to find some of the necessary exotic ingredients. Thanks to Hillcrest Foods, these home chefs will suffer no more. The Sparta, New Jersey-based firm has come up with an idea that can save cooks the four-hour search for pickled baby cactus leaves: international dinner sets, each including an elegant menu (with recipes) for four and all the required hard-to-find ingredients. (The home chef still has to shop for the readily available items.)

Two kits are currently available, a Japanese dinner (designed by Japanese cooking authority Elizabeth Andoh) and a Mexican dinner (from the Boston restaurant chef Jose Romero). Planned future kits include Middle Eastern, Chinese and Italian. The kits retail for about $29.

—Food and Wine

Hot peppers for shingles

People who eat a steady diet of peppery foods usually find that, after a time, they can devour more of the hot stuff without the searing effects. Now researchers have discovered that the same process that helps pepper-eaters build up a tolerance to hot foods can short-circuit the pain of shingles.

A substance in the peppers, capsaicin, depletes a neurochemical that carries pain impulses from the nerves in the skin to the central nervous system. The brain no longer receives pain messages from that area. This same process lets hot-pepper-lovers indulge without pain.

Capsaicin, now available in an over-the-counter cream called Zostrix, is also being tested for relieving the pain of mastectomy and diabetic nerve damage.

—Prevention

Too much location?

Is this idea all wet? David Walter of Fairhope, Alabama, wants to open what he thinks is the nation's only restaurant that requires customers to wade through water to enter. The restaurant's planned location is Gulf Shores, Alabama, on the Gulf of Mexico, in a former oil-field boat anchored 50 feet from the beach in three feet of water. Walter has applied for Army Corps of Engineers permits, and the city is studying the plan's legality.

—USA Today

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ANNUAL REPORT INSERT

RESTAURANTS USA

THE SQUEEZE IS ON LOCATION